REGISTER SUDHNOTI

A COMPREHENSIVE HISTORY OF THE SADOZAI TRIBE

YOUSUF KHAN ABAKHEL SADOZAI

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

In the name of **Allah,** the Most Gracious,
the Most Merciful.

Volume- I

Register Sudhnoti

A Comprehensive History of the Sadozai Tribe

By
Yousuf Khan Abakhel Sadozai

An official history of the Sadozai rulers and
chieftains of the erstwhile Sudhnoti State
from 1407 to 1947 AD

Register Sudhnoti

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to Hafiz Waja Khan Sadozai, Sardar Suba Khan Sadozai, and Sardar Sherbaz Khan Sadozai, who preserved the history of the Pakhtuns Sadozai chieftains, and from whose written history we benefit today. May Allah, the Almighty, grant complete forgiveness to these three authors.

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ORIGIN TO THE REGISTER SUDHNOTI

CHAPTER 1

In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful, the Lord of all the worlds. I express my gratitude to Allah, who chose me to undertake this great task. Allah Almighty has declared, "and that the man does not deserve but [the reward of] his own effort" (Surah An-Najm, 53:39). Indeed, it is a principle of Allah that whatever a person strives for, the Creator of the universe grants it to him.

Throughout my life, I have made intense efforts towards two significant works. The first is

the diary written in Persian in 1690, known as "Dirop Nama", and the second is the "Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti" diary written in 1855. This has been the result of my utmost efforts, while I had the misfortune that the Dirop Nama and Maakhaz (Sources) Sudhnoti which were translated into Urdu under the guidance of my grandfather, Sardar Sherbaz Khan, in 1969 by the Persian language teacher Master Raza Khan and my grandfather intended to publish these translated diaries under the title Register Sudhnoti, but God Almighty did not give Sardar Sherbaz Khan time to publish Register Sudhnoti and he died before publishing Register Sudhnoti.

After his passing, his cousin's son, Sardar Iqbal Khan, who was his close disciple, took possession of Register Sudhnoti along with other manuscripts of Sardar Sherbaz Khan. Despite repeated requests from my uncle, Sardar Abdul Mahboob Khan, and the author of this book Yousuf Khan, to retrieve the manuscript, Sardar Iqbal Khan always denied having any knowledge of the book. Whereas

Sardar Sherbaz Khan had already made public statements in various newspapers regarding the imminent publication of Register Sudhnoti. This led Sardar Arif Khan Sadozai, the author of History of Sudhan Tribes, and other well-informed intellectuals from Sudhnoti to visit our home multiple times seeking information about the manuscript. Sardar Arif Khan Sadozai even threatened to file criminal charges against my father's big brother, Sardar Abdul Mahboob Khan, accusing him of holding onto these historical documents.

However, after the sudden disappearance of the manuscript following Sardar Sherbaz Khan's death, Sardar Arif Khan Sadozai was left disappointed in his search. While "Mohsin-e Qoum" Sardar Arif Khan Sadozai, the author of the book "Tareekh-e Sudhan Qabail", on the advice of my uncle father's big brother Sardar Abdul Mehboob, made several rounds at Sardar Iqbal's house, but Arif Khan Sadozai did not get anything from there either.

What needs to be explained here is that

how did the Dirop Nama written in 1690 and the Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti diary written in 1855 remain preserved with Sardar Sherbaz Khan? And how did Register Sudhnoti disappear after his death? Moreover, how did these historical documents eventually come into the possession of the author of this book Yusuf Khan?

A brief explanation of when and how the author obtained these historical documents is presented here. The author and translator of Register Sudhnoti, Sardar Sherbaz Khan, was a descendant of Baba-e-Khan Dirop Khan, the famous just ruler of Sudhnoti from 1626 to 1650, belonging to the 12th generation. Baba-e-Dirop's grandson, the author of Dirop Nama, Hafiz Waja Khan, was from the 9th generation. The author of Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti, Sardar Suba Khan, belonged to the 6th generation of Hafiz Waja Khan, while the translator of Register Sudhnoti, Sardar Sherbaz Khan, was the great-grandson of Sardar Suba Khan and he was the grandfather of author of this

book, Yusuf Khan Abakhel Sadozai

The connection between these four authors is that Hafiz Sardar Waja Khan wrote Dirop Nama in Persian in 1690. Sardar Suba Khan, the last ruler of Sudhnoti, took excerpts from Dirop Nama and included them in his Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti diary, written in Persian, documenting the history of Sudhnoti from 1407 to 1855. These two Persian manuscripts were inherited by Sardar Sherbaz Khan, who translated them into Urdu under the title Register Sudhnoti in 1969.

However, after Sardar Sherbaz Khan's sudden death, the mysterious disappearance of this manuscript is actually driven by beliefs in blind following, such as the worship of saints, as the author of this book learned from his uncle, Abdul Mahboob Khan.

He narrates that his father, Sardar Sherbaz Khan, was deeply saddened after the loss of numerous Arab Muslims during World War I at the hands of the British Indian Army. After retiring, Sardar Sherbaz Khan would often

spend nights in isolation, engaged in repentance and prayer on the roof of his house. In the latter part of the night, he would visit the selected site for his grave, where he would continue his prayers and return home for Fajr prayer, often remaining on the roof until sunrise. Gradually, he became known as a spiritual figure in his area.

Consequently, Sardar Iqbal, the grandson of his cousin, became his devoted follower and would often join him in nightlong prayers. Sardar Iqbal recalls that Sardar Sherbaz Khan would frequently chant "Allah-o-Akbar" and "Haq Tu Hi Allah" throughout the night. This chant had such a profound effect on Sardar Iqbal that eyewitnesses report that when Sardar Iqbal began giving "Ghusl" (Washing & Shrouding) to Sardar Sherbaz Khan's body after his death, he heard the chant "Haq Tu Hi Allah when Sardar Iqbal poured water on Sardar Sherbaz Khan's chest and rubbed his hand, the voice of "Haq Tu Hi Allah". Terrified, he fled, as did those

assisting with the ghusl by holding the cloth sheets. Eventually, Sardar Sherbaz Khan's nephew, Sardar Ali Muhammad, completed the ghusl of the deceased.

The author believes that Sardar Iqbal's psychological condition, influenced by years of listening to this chant in the dark of night, made him believe that Sardar Sherbaz Khan's voice continued to echo even after his death. This blind devotion led Sardar Iqbal, who was illiterate, to consider the manuscript of Register Sudhnoti and other religious texts as sacred relics, keeping them to himself and refusing to share them with anyone.

However, as soon as the author of this book gained consciousness, he repeatedly requested Sardar Iqbal to return the manuscript, as his uncle (taya) had informed him that it was in Sardar Iqbal's possession. After years of persistence, Sardar Iqbal finally returned and sent the manuscript to my home, a few days before his death, with the message that "I had protected it for 52 years but now, since my death is probably

certain, so it is being handed over to you? while apparently Sardar Iqbal protected this book well but unfortunately due to keeping the register closed for a long time, the ink of forty pages had fused together, making these valued papers difficult to read. This made it challenging to find details about the fort commander Throchi and sons of Nawab Jassi Khan and other Sadozai Pakhtuns including Dina Khel Sadozai and Roghan Sadozai, who moved from Sudhnoti to Swat after Nawab Jassi Khan's death.

Thus, this book does not cover them. Nevertheless, I am grateful to the Almighty, who allowed the combined manuscripts of Dirop Nama and Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti to reach us in the form of Register Sudhnoti, with approximately 85% of the content preserved and intact. Today, we are publishing these historical documents for the readers of history in collaboration with other modern sources under the title Register Sudhnoti.

Yousuf Khan Abakhel Sadozai

Captain Sherbaz Khan Abakhel Sadozai.

BRIEF INTRODUCTION AND GENEALOGY OF FOUR AUTHORS

CHAPTER 2

After explaining the sources of Register Sudhnoti, it is essential to present a brief introduction and genealogy of the distinguished Sadozai Sudhan authors who have rendered a great service to their future generations by documenting their history through the ages. The first of these authors is Sardar Hafiz Waja Khan, who wrote the book "Dirop Nama" in Persian in 1690. Following him is Sardar Suba Khan, who wrote the book "Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti" in Persian in 1855.

Both books were translated into Urdu in 1969 by Sardar Sherbaz Khan with the help of Master Raza Khan, a Persian language teacher, and were named Register Sudhnoti. The author of this book, Yousuf Khan Abakhel Sadozai, modernized Register Sudhnoti using many other contemporary sources. Therefore, the first introduction and genealogy presented here is of the author Yousuf Khan Abakhel Sadozai, whose genealogies include the introductions of the other authors through the generations.

Yousuf Khan Abakhel Sadozai is a seventeenth-generation descendant of Sufi Abdullah Jan Sadozai, who arrived in Sudhnoti in 1560 with his four sons and two thousand Sadozais. He is also a twelfth-generation descendant of Hafiz Waja Khan, the author of "Dirop Nama." Hafiz Waja Khan documented the first history of the Sadozais in "Dirop Nama" in 1690, where he wrote that his ancestors migrated from Swabi Handa to Sudhnoti due to a military campaign led by Nawab Sardar

Abdullah Sadozai 130 years earlier.

Hafiz Waja Khan described the historical context of this migration, noting that the Gakkhar Sultanate, allied with the Mughals, became unstable after the death of Sultan Sardar Kamal Khan Gakkhar. As his successors fought for power, Emperor Akbar divided the Gakkhar Sultanate (empire) among Sultan Kamal Khan's four sons. Dissatisfied with their territories, these princes began expanding their realms. Among them, Sultan Syed Khan Gakkhar, with a cavalry of ten thousand, inherited a small state of 240 villages. His state bordered the Pakhtun state of Sudhnoti at Kahuta along the Jhelum River whereas on the other side of Jhelum River towards Aular located the Pakhtun state of Sudhnoti.

It is worth noting that Sultan Syed Khan Gakkhar, also known as Saeed Ghakkar in history, expanded his small state by conquering neighboring areas. At the same time, Nawab Sardar Abdullah Khan Sadozai, the ruler of Sudhnoti, worried about his state's security

with only a force of four hundred Pakhtuns, recruited two thousand Abakhel Sadozai warriors from his ancestral Afghan Sadozai country Pakhtunkhwa and brought them to Sudhnoti. Pahtunkhwa was founded by Sultan Gaju Khan Sadozai and he setup its capital and military base in Swabi Handa. Among these two thousand Sadozais was Sardar Sufi Abdullah Jan Sadozai, who arrived in Sudhnoti in 1560 with his four sons, Sardar Khaili Khan, Sardar Baloch Khan, Sardar Ashraf Khan, and Sardar Dhamu Khan.

Sardar Dhamu Khan, after whom the famous village of Dhuman in Tehsil Baloch is named, had two sons: the elder Sardar Mast Khan Sadozai, whose tomb is in Manjhari village and his descendants lived there, and the younger Sardar Gaju Khan Sadozai, who had one son, Khan Dirop Khan Badshah. Khan Dirop Khan was the first elected ruler of Sudhnoti among the Abakhel Sadozais, ruling from 1626 to 1650.

He had six sons, whose descendants reside

in the village of Dhuman. Baba-e-Khan Rahat Dirop Badshah, born in 1591, had six sons: the eldest was Sardar Daniyal Sadozai, followed by Sardar Salat Khan Sadozai, Sardar Noor Khan Sadozai, Sardar Mir Khan Sadozai (born in 1631), Sardar Qadmal Khan Sadozai, and the youngest and dearest, Sardar Bacha Khan Sadozai.

The author of this book, Yousuf Khan Abakhel Sadozai, belongs to the lineage of Sardar Mir Khan's Miral branch. In 1655, Sardar Hafiz Waja Khan was born to Sardar Mir Khan Sadozai. Hafiz Waja Khan, who passed away in 1701, authored the "Dirop Nama" and was the only offspring of Sardar Mir Khan. His eldest son was Sardar Abdullah, whose middle son was Sardar Kalo Khan, whose eldest son was Sardar Baqar, whose son was Sardar Ibrahim Khan, and whose son was Sardar Suba Khan. "Sardar Suba Khan ruled Sudhnoti from September 1844 to March 3, 1859, and is the author of the book 'Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti'."

Sardar Suba Khan's youngest son, Sardar

Lamma Khan, also known as Sardar Sarhataj, earned his title "Sarhataj" from the Sudhnoti chiefs after seizing the crown from the Raja of Poonch. Consequently, a guerrilla war ensued for a year between Sardar Lamma Khan and the Raja of Poonch, during which the Raja suffered significant casualties and financial losses. Eventually, the Raja was compelled to recognize Lamma Khan's rule over nine villages in Sudhnoti under a treaty.

Sardar Abdul Manan Khan, known as Manna Khan, was the eldest son of Sardar Lamma Khan. After Sardar Lamma Khan's death, the Raja of Poonch refused to acknowledge Sardar Abdul Manan Khan's rule over these villages, attempting to confine him to two estates. This led to a two-year war between Abdul Manan Khan and the Raja of Poonch, during which Abdul Manan's guerrilla actions caused severe losses to the Raja. Consequently, the Raja announced a reward of ten thousand rupees for Abdul Manan's capture.

Tempted by this reward, a friend of Abdul Manan's from Murree, the son of Raja Karamdad, invited him to a meal, laced it with narcotics, and handed him over to the Dogra government while he was unconscious. Subsequently, the Dogra government executed Sardar Abdul Mannan Khan.

Sardar Abdul Manan Khan's youngest son, Chairman and Councillor of Sudhnoti, Sardar Captain Sherbaz Khan, founded the "4th Sudhnoti Jathha Force" and authored and translated the book "Register Sudhnoti" in 1969. Sardar Sherbaz Khan's youngest son is Sardar Khan Muhammad Khan, whose middle son is Yousuf Khan Abakhel Sadozai, the author of the book "Register Sudhnoti," which is now in your hands.

❖

Hafiz Waja Khan Abakhel Sadozai, the first writer and historian of Sudhnoti who wrote the book on the history of the rulers of Sudnoti titled "Dirop Nama" in 1690.

BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE BHAN STATE

CHAPTER 3

After discussing the sources and authors, we turn to the introduction of Bhan state, where Afghan Nawab Jassi Khan Abdal Sadozai established his rule in 1407 AD. He changed the name of this region from Bhan to Sudhnoti and laid the foundation of the Pakhtun state of Sudhnoti. Sardar Suba Khan, in his work "Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti", mentions that the region, now known as Sudhnoti, was recognized as Bhan from the 8th century AD to the 14th century AD. The first historian of this land, Sardar Hafiz

Waja Khan, writes that Bhan was primarily a land of Brahmins, who ruled this region from the 8th century AD until the end of the 13th century.

One unique aspect of Bhan's history is that from the 8th century AD until the end of the 16th century AD, it was never part of any external, Indian, or Kashmiri sultanate, despite being surrounded by large empires.

Hafiz Waja further writes that the primary reasons why the state of Bhan was never under the control or subjugation of any major empire could be because all the valleys and streams in the forests of Bhan were recognized as sacred lands for the Brahmins' ascetic practices. Brahmins from faraway places would come here for their ascetic rituals (tapasya). After completing their tapasya, some Brahmins would return to their native lands, while others would settle in Bhan permanently, and many ascetics were already living there. The duration of a Brahmin's tapasya could range from one year to twelve

years, and if someone wished to continue , they could start again according to their intention.

The process of tapasya involved sitting alone under a tree, away from human habitation, without consuming any food or drink, and engaging in silent meditation from morning to evening without the presence of any statue or idol. Alternatively, some would immerse themselves in water up to their neck in a river, silently meditating for several hours, multiple times a day, from morning until evening. There were many other methods as well, but if one observes the lifestyle of the devout Brahmins of Bhan, their entire lives seemed to be one continuous tapasya.

The Brahmins of Bhan always regarded contentment and asceticism as the most important aspects of their religion, which is why it is believed that major empires considered this land to be one of poverty and destitution, and thus never attacked Bhan. Hafiz Waja Khan further writes that Bhan was a mountainous

region surrounded by dense forests, situated between the rivers Jhelum and Poonch, covering an area of 1,420 square kilometers (550 square miles) of challenging terrain. Due to its geographical boundaries, no large caravan could find a safe passage into Bhan, which might explain why it was not annexed by any Indian or Kashmiri empire for a long time.

Bhan was considered an unproductive region, abundant in forests, and provided no safe route for large caravans. The cost of controlling this area was high, with very few resources to be gained, which is likely why it was never given significant importance by any major Indian or Kashmiri empire. Thus, from the 8th century AD until the end of the 13th century AD, Bhan remained under the self-rule (Aapraji govt.) of Brahmins. However, in 1399 AD, the Bagri Rajputs of hill Punjab, along with their allies, the Gakkhars, began attacking Bhan and, after a year of fighting, established complete control over it by the beginning of the 14th century AD.

Thus, when the Bhagari Rajputs started collecting taxes and revenue from the strict religious contented Brahmins who had lived in the Bhan valleys for centuries, the financial condition of the Brahmins became worse. Hafiz Waja Khan notes that the period of Bagri Rajput rule over Bhan lasted six years, ten months, and a few days. He further mentions that until the end of 1406 AD, the Bagri Rajputs and their allies, the Gakkhars, ruled over Bhan. During this time, in the last month of 1406, a caravan led by Afghan Nawab Jassi Khan Abdal Sadozai, traveling from Afghanistan to India, lost its way while traveling around Taxila and camped in the mountains near Murree, adjacent to Bhan region. The Brahmins, recognizing the Afghan caravan as their potential savior, sent a delegation to meet Nawab Jassi Khan Abdal Sadozai and invited him to attack the occupying Bagris and Gakkhars, assuring him of their submission if he succeeded.

After receiving this assurance, Nawab Jassi

Khan Abdal Sadozai attacked the ancestral land of the Brahmins and, within a few weeks, defeated the Bagris and Gakkhars, establishing his rule over Bhan in 1407 AD. He renamed the region from Bhan to Sudhnoti, a name it is still known by today.

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THE MIGRATION OF AFGHAN NAWAB JASSI KHAN ABDAL SADOZAI AND ITS HISTORICAL CONTEXT

CHAPTER 4

The Afghan Nawab Jassi Khan Abdal Sadozai, founder of the Pakhtun state of Sudhnoti, migrated from Afghanistan around the end of 1406 AD, according to Hafiz Waja Khan's diary, written in Persian in 1690, titled Dirop Nama. Nawab Jassi Khan, along with his family and 200 horsemen from his clan, left Ghazni in search of a better future and headed towards India.

At that time, Tajuddin Firoz Shah Bahmani was the ruler of India. Firoz Shah was a devout Muslim ruler, highly knowledgeable in the

Quran and Islamic jurisprudence, and was regarded as a great king. He was known for keeping the doors of his court open to scholars, artisans, and brave warriors. Every year, he would send ships from the two major eastern ports of his kingdom, Goa and Dabhol, to the Persian Gulf to recruit talented individuals, administrators, and brave Muslim warriors and artisans to bring back to his country and contribute to its development.

Hafiz Waja writes that as Firoz Shah Bahmani's reputation for appreciating scholars, artisans, and brave Muslim warriors spread far and wide, many people from Iran, Afghanistan, and other distant regions set their sights on the Bahmani Kingdom. Among them was Nawab Jassi Khan, who, along with 200 chiefs from his clan, also decided to head towards the Bahmani Kingdom.

However, destiny had other plans. As the caravan journeyed from Ghazni, passing through most of the regions of present-day Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, they eventually

reached Taxila. From there, they lost their way and ended up in the hills of Murree. While resting in these hills for a few days, they found themselves near the land of Bhan, which was under the control of the Bhagri Rajputs, who had seized it from the Brahmins. Although the Brahmins were the majority population, they were oppressed and helpless under the Bhagri Rajputs.

When the Brahmins saw this armed Afghan contingent encamped at the very gates of their state, they saw it as a potential savior. Frustrated by the Bhagri Rajputs' tyranny, the Brahmins invited Nawab Jassi Khan Abdal Sadozai to attack the occupiers, promising to remain loyal subjects under the Sadozai rule if he succeeded.

With this assurance, Nawab Jassi Khan Sadozai recruited more Pakhtuns into his army, took command of both the Afghan and Brahmin forces, and launched an attack on Bhan. Within a few weeks, the Bhagri Rajputs were defeated, and the Brahmins

crowned Nawab Jassi Khan Sadozai as the ruler of Bhan. On this occasion, the Brahmins' religious leader, Guru Vishnudas, conferred upon him the title of "Sudhan," meaning brave and just. Henceforth, Nawab Jassi Khan renamed the region from Bhan to Sudhnoti, meaning the place or homeland of the Sudhan.

From Hafiz Waja Khan's writing, it appears that Nawab Jassi Khan Abdal Sadozai's caravan initially chose the ancient route from Afghanistan to Peshawar, then to Taxila, followed by Lahore, and eventually aimed to reach the Bahmani Kingdom via Shri Ganga Nagar, Rajasthan, and possibly through Malwa or Bhopal; however, "Wallaahu aa'lamu bissavaab" (Allah knows best).

❖

Nawab Jassi Khan Abdal Sadozai

A MISCONCEPTION AND ITS RECTIFICATION REGARDING THE BIRTHDATE OF MALIK SADDO BIN UMAR, FOREFATHER OF NAWAB JASSI KHAN

CHAPTER 5

The author of this book, Yousuf Khan Abakhel Sadozai, has reviewed and studied numerous books where the birthdate of Saddo bin Umar, the ancestor of the Sadozai tribe, is incorrectly recorded as 1558. These books mistakenly present Afghan Nawab Jassi Khan Abdal Sadozai as a descendant of Utman Sadozai. It is, therefore, necessary to correct this misunderstanding by these authors. These historians have written Malik Saddo bin Umar's birth-date as 1558 and have listed him as the sixteenth descendant of

Qais Abdul Rashid. There is no doubt that all historians, whether Pakhtun or non-Pakhtun, have unanimously recognized Malik Saddo, the ancestor of the Sadozai tribes, as the sixteenth descendant of Qais Abdul Rashid. This lineage has been accepted because Malik Saddo bin Umar's genealogy is perfectly aligned with the standards of human reasoning, logic, science, sociology, and genealogy. According to this lineage, Qais Abdul Rashid, who was born in 575 AD, has Malik Saddo, the ancestor of the Sadozai tribes, born as his sixteenth descendant. This genealogy is outlined as follows:

1. Qais Abdul Rashid,	2. Satarbin,
3. Khurushbun (Khairuddin),	4. Tarin,
5. Abdal,	6. Zakhtar,
7. Isa,	8. Zirk,
9. Popal,	10. Habib,
11. Bami,	12. Gani,
13. Bahlul,	14. Maroof Khan,
15. Umar,	16. Malik Saddo

From this genealogy, it is clear that Malik

Saddo, the ancestor of the Sadozai tribes, was born as the sixteenth descendant of Qais Abdul Rashid. All historians, especially those who have written the genealogy of Malik Saddo, the ancestor of the Sadozai tribe, in their books agree on this. After this, the birthdate of Malik Saddo was written as 1558, which indicates that these historians are unaware of the science of human genealogy. These historians have mistakenly mixed Malik Saddo, the ancestor of the Sadozai tribes, who was born in 1078, with a fictional governor of Safa Malik Saddo, whose birthdate is 1558. This claim by these historians contradicts the scientific principles of human genealogy in a funny manner.

According to science, it takes at least 78 years for three generations to pass, with a maximum of 96 years required. Let's test human genealogy with a scientific principle by giving an example. Suppose a person named Malik Abdullah is born in 2020, marries at the age of 24 in 2046, and has a son named

Abdullah I in 2047. In 2072, Abdullah I marry at the age of 25, and a year later, in 2073, Abdullah II is born. In 2098, Abdullah II marries at the age of 25 and has a son named Abdullah III in 2099. The genealogy would be like this: 1. Abdullah III, son of, 2. Abdullah II, son of, 3. Abdullah I, son of, 4. Malik Abdullah

In this genealogy, Abdullah III enters the third generation after Malik Abdullah and the fourth generation afterward, but by genealogical principles, Abdullah III will be counted in the third generation. From this, it is evident that the period from Malik Abdullah, born in 2020, to Abdullah III is 79 years. This is the "scientific principle of human genealogy," showing that three generations can easily come into existence within 79 years. This is why expert genealogists have set the minimum duration of three generations from one person at 70 years and the maximum at 96 years.

Based on this scientific standard, if we consider the 575 AD birthdate of Qais Abdul

Rashid and apply a 96-year limit per three generations up to Malik Saddo, the ancestor of the Sadozai tribe, it still turns out that the combined age of sixteen generations from Qais Abdul Rashid to Malik Saddo is 505 years, which is the maximum stated. Therefore, according to the scientific standard of human genealogy, Malik Saddo bin Umar, the ancestor of the Sadozai tribes, who is the sixteenth descendant of Qais Abdul Rashid, cannot have been born in 1558. Readers of this book can estimate the period from their great-grandfather to themselves, as no one can be more than 70, 80, 90, 96, or at most 100 years younger than their great-grandfather's father (i.e., their great-great-grandfather). Hence, if we apply a 100-year limit per three generations from Qais Abdul Rashid's birthdate of 575 AD to Malik Saddo, the ancestor of the Sadozai tribe, it still turns out that Malik Saddo, the ancestor of the Sadozai tribes, would have been born 525 years later, making his birthdate 1100 AD, which can be

consistent with science, sociology, human genealogy, and logic. However, a birth date of 1558 AD is unreasonable, as it is impossible for someone born in 575 AD to have a descendant in the sixteenth generation born in 1558.

Therefore, according to the writings of historian Sardar Suba Khan in the book "Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti," the birth date of Malik Saddo bin Umar, the ancestor of Afghan Nawab Jassi Khan Abdal Sadozai, as 1078 AD is correct and accurate in every respect.

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BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE PAKHTUN STATE OF SUDHNOTI

CHAPTER 6

The first historian of the Pakhtun state of Sudhnoti was Hafiz Waja Khan, who wrote "Dirop Nama" in 1690, detailing the history of the renowned ruler Baba-e-Khan, Dirop Khan Badshah of Sudhnoti. In his work, he mentions that when Afghan Nawab Jassi Khan Abdal Sadozai founded the Pakhtun state of Sudhnoti in 1407 in the ancestral state of Brahmins called Bhan, he changed its name from Bhan to Sudhnoti. Hafiz Waja Khan briefly mentions that the reason behind changing the name was that the word "Bhan" in Sanskrit

meant "sensitivity and attention," but its meaning in Pashto and Persian wasn't appropriate. When the Brahmins extended an invitation to Afghan Nawab Jassi Khan Abdali Sadozai to liberate their land from the oppressive rule of the Bhagri Rajputs and Gakkhars—who had made the lives of these modest and devout Brahmins unbearable—they assured him that, upon his victory, they would remain loyal and obedient to his rule. Accepting their offer, Nawab Jassi Khan launched an attack on Bhan, defeated the Bhagri Rajputs and Gakkhars, and established his rule over the region.

On the occasion of his coronation as the ruler of Bhan, the Brahmins bestowed upon Nawab Jassi Khan the title of "Sudhan," reaffirming their loyalty and allegiance to him. In response, Nawab Jassi Khan renamed the region from Bhan to "Sudhnoti," which means "the abode or homeland of the Sudhan." From that time onward, the region came to be known as Sudhnoti, a name that has persisted to this day.

According to the author of "Makhaz-e-Sudhnoti" Sardar Suba Khan, Sudhnoti's boundaries are from Sehnsa to the narrow strip of land known as Sudhan Gali, and from Palangi to Saail Panjar, covering a total area of 1,420 square kilometers (550 square miles). The state was established by Pakhtun Nawab Jassi Khan Abdal Sadozai in 1407.

Sehnsa

↓

Palangi - Sudhnoti - Saail Panjar

↓

Sudhan Gali

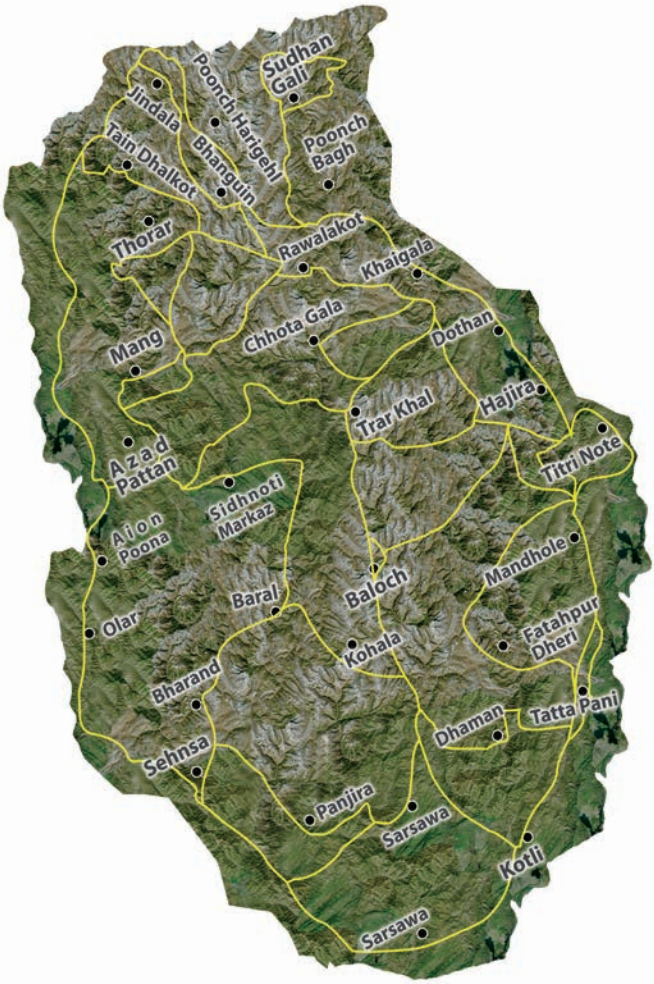
Sudhnoti is bordered by the state of Poonch to the northeast, Chip and Rajouri to the south, and the Gakkhars to the west. Despite being Muslim states, these four regions often remained at odds with each other. The Pakhtun Sadozai Sudhan rulers of Sudhnoti constructed fifteen small and large forts, with three being considered the capital forts of Sudhnoti:

1. **Fort Khan-e-khanan Poonah,**
2. **Fort Baral (Bawar), and**
3. **Fort Bharand (Brahan).**

These forts remain a significant part of the cultural heritage of the Sadozai Sudhan rulers in Sudhnoti. Additionally, thirteen other smaller forts were built in Sudhnoti, most of which have now turned into archaeological sites.

Since 1980, the government of Azad Kashmir has repurposed many of these archaeological forts. After removing the beautifully carved solid stones from the fallen walls of these forts, they turned them into rest houses, high schools, or colleges or etc.

One such small fort was near the author's residence in the Baloch Police Station area, which was destroyed by the Sikhs during the third Sikh-Sudhnoti war in 1832. The ruins of this fort were visible until 1990, after which a beautiful rest house was constructed on the site, using the stones from the original fort. Similarly, in the famous village of Dhaman in Tehsil Baloch, where notable rulers and warriors



The map of erstwhile Pakhtun State of Sudhnoti

of Sudhnoti like Baba-e-Dirop Badshah, Sardar Shams Khan, Sardar and writer Sardar Suba Khan, Sardar Sabz Ali Khan and Sardar Milli Khan along with many generals of Sudhnoti, who were martyred in the third Sikh-Sudhnoti war lived, there were fort-like structures. Also, in the village of Dhaman of these Sudhnoti rulers, martyrs and ghazis, they had built Dupli-like forts, of which the remains of one such fort can still be seen near the author's house. A survey indicates that there are thirteen such forts in the former Pakhtun state of Sudhnoti, which are now either schools, colleges, or rest houses.

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Sardar Milli Khan,Abakhel Sadozai, the cousin of Sardar Sabz Ali Khan, a renowned general of Sudhnoti.

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION: THE FIRST CAPITAL OF SUDHNOTI, FORT AAIN POONAH

CHAPTER 7

Fort Aain Poonah was the first fort of the Pakhtun state of Sudhnoti, and it continues to attract tourists from far and wide. This fort was constructed on a mountain in Sudhnoti, overlooking the Jhelum River, and is known for its strength and beauty. Before Sudhnoti, formerly known as Bhan, was under the control of the Bagars, who lived in hilltop dwellings in the mountains of Bhan. Most of the Bagars' forces lived in these highlands while overseeing tax collection in the valleys below, but they had

no permanent forts or structured government system-relying solely on looting for their livelihood. The Bagars had built large residences in the mountains, from where they controlled the local Brahmins of Sudhnoti (Bhan).

When Afghan Nawab Jassi Khan Abdal Sadozai took control of Bhan and renamed it Sudhnoti, establishing his rule, he and other Afghan chieftain initially lived in the Bagars' dwellings. Hafiz Waja Khan mentions that Nawab Jassi Khan was a learned, just, and far-sighted leader who, under emergency circumstances, quickly began constructing a fort, naming it "Aain Poonah."

According to Sardar Suba Khan, the author of "Maakhaz Sudhnoti", the fort's name reflects Nawab Jassi Khan's scholarly nature, as the word "Aain" in Persian means "law or system," which holds the same meaning in Pushto. This suggests that Nawab Jassi Khan, a wise ruler of his time, laid the foundation of his government by naming the fort Aain, thus emphasizing the importance of law and order.

The founder of the Pakhtun state of Sudhnoti, Afghan Nawab Jassi Khan Abdal Sadozai, ruled over Sudhnoti for ten years until his death in 1417. The construction of Fort Aain Poonah was completed in 1420, taking ten years according to Hafiz Waja Khan. The fort served as the capital of Sudhnoti from 1420 until 1505, when another Nawab, Sardar Pannu Khan Abdal Sadozai, expanded it, and it became known as Fort Khan-e-khanan Poonah. As the first capital of Sudhnoti, Fort Khan-e-khanan Poonah witnessed many ups and downs before eventually falling during the third Sikh-Sudhnoti war.

According to Muhammad Din Fauq, the author of "Tareekh-e-Aqwam-e-Poonch Kashmir", during the third Sikh-Sudhnoti war in 1832, the fort's commandant was the famous general Sardar Khudood Khan Sadozai, who served from 1796 to 1832. Sardar Khudood Khan had dealt a severe defeat to the Sikh Empire during the 1814 Sikh-Sudhnoti war.

However, in the 1832 war, he was defeated at Fort Khan-e-khanan (Aain) Poonah and was martyred along with 500 Sadozai Sudhan soldiers. After the fall of Sudhnoti, all the Sadozai Sudhan rulers' forts, including Fort Aain Poonah, came under the control of the Sikh Empire of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and the fort remained under Sikh control from 1832 to 1844.

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Fort Aain Poonah- the first capital of Sudhnoti.

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION: THE SECOND CAPITAL OF SUDHNOTI, FORT BRAHAN (BHARAND)

CHAPTER 8

The first historian of Sudhanoti, Sardar Hafiz Waja Khan, while detailing Brahan Fort, which is known as Bharand Fort in modern times and referred to as the second capital of Sudhnoti, writes that Nawab of Sudhnoti, Sardar Pannu Khan Sadozai, had ten sons. However, during his lifetime, he did not appoint any of his sons as his heir. Instead, he had chosen a method based on the "Rasm-e-Khudai" (Divine Selection) for the selection of the next ruler. After Sardar Pannu's death, his ten sons were

seated to select the new Sultan of Sudhnoti through the "Rasm-e-Khudai."

It is important to explain what "Rasm-e-Khudai" is. "Rasm-e-Khudai" refers to the tradition or principle believed to involve the will of God. In Sudhnoti, this ancient tradition, similar to practices from the era of the Israelites, was used. The practice was that all the Sardars (chiefs) of Sudhnoti would gather in a council at Fort Khan-e-khanan. The method of selecting the new Sultan through "Rasm-e-Khudai" involved seating the late Sultan's sons at three-meter intervals in a closed hall of the fort. Three bundles of grass were burned three times separately, and the smoke that emerged from the burning grass was observed. Whichever son the smoke drifted towards three times was considered the chosen Nawab of the Sudhnoti state. During this "Rasm-e-Khudai," the smoke from the three bundles of grass drifted towards the middle son of Sardar Pannu Khan Sadozai, Sardar Brahan Khan Abdal Sadozai, each time.

Consequently, all the chiefs of Sudhnoti pledged allegiance to Sardar Brahan, who was then declared the new Sultan of Sudhnoti.

Hafiz Waja writes that Sardar Brahan Khan considered the direction in which he was seated during the "Rasm-e-Khudai" and towards which the smoke drifted as a blessing. He decided to relocate his capital in that direction and was particularly fond of a hill in the Wasu Kath region. This hill was also famous as a place of tapasya for Brahmins. Therefore, he began constructing Brahan Fort here in 1530, and it was completed in 1535. After its completion, Nawab Sardar Brahan Khan Abdal Sadozai selected Brahan Fort as the new capital of Sudhnoti and moved there with great pomp and ceremony.

However, on the first night, Sardar's beloved wife, Thara Bibi, who was believed to be possessed by a jinn or witch, jumped off the roof of the fort and committed suicide. From that night onwards, horses and other animals in the fort began to die regularly. A few

months later, Nawab Sardar Brahan Khan himself fell gravely ill and passed away within a month. Following his death, his eldest son, Sardar Abdullah Khan Abdal Sadozai, took over the rule of Sudhnoti and abandoned Brahan Fort permanently, relocating the capital back to Fort Khan-e-khanan.

Brahan Fort served as the capital of Sudhnoti for only five months and a few days. Afterward, it remained abandoned and became a haven for wild animals until the reign of Nawab Saeed Khan Sadozai. Today, Brahan Fort is known as Bharand Fort, named after Nawab Sardar Brahan, while it is also referred to as Thara's Fort, after his wife Thara Bibi.

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The Second Capital of Sudhnoti, Fort Brahan (Bharand)

A BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: THE SECOND MIGRATION OF SADOZAI SUDHANS FROM SWABI HANDA TO SUDHNOTI

CHAPTER 9

When the pious ruler of the Sudhnoti state, Sardar Brahan Khan Abdal Sadozai, moved the capital from Fort Khan-e-khanan to Brahan Fort, his beloved wife Thara Bibi suddenly died on the very first night at Brahan Fort. Following her death, not only did horses and other animals start dying at Brahan Fort, but human deaths also began occurring. The first historian of Sudhnoti, Hafiz Waja Khan, writes that the sudden death of Sardar Brahan's beloved wife Thara Bibi, followed by the death of horses,

other animals, and humans in the fort, caused Sardar Brahan Khan to fall seriously ill.

Unable to withstand these sudden calamities, Sardar Brahan Khan passed away at Brahan Fort five months and a few days later. After his death, his eldest son, Sardar Abdullah Khan Abdal Sadozai, who was considered a highly astute and farsighted ruler, immediately moved the capital of Sudhnoti back from Brahan Fort to Fort Khan-e-khanan. He then held a Sadozai Loya Jirga at Fort Khan-e-khanan and proclaimed his rule, which was accepted by all the Afghan chieftains of Sudhnoti. As a result, Sardar Abdullah Khan Abdal Sadozai ruled Sudhnoti in an organized manner from 1536 to 1564.

In 1560, after the death of Sultan Sardar Kamal Khan Gakkhar of the Gakkhar Sultanate, which was allied with the Mughals, a conflict arose among his successors for control of the Gakkhar Sultanate. This conflict escalated, leading Mughal Emperor Akbar to divide the Gakkhar Sultanate among the four

sons of the late Sultan Sardar Kamal Khan. After this division, the four Gakkhar rulers found their territories, which they had inherited from their father, to be too small. Consequently, they began expanding their domains by conquering nearby areas.

One of these Gakkhar rulers was Sultan Syed Khan, who had a cavalry of 10,000 soldiers and had inherited a small state consisting of 240 villages. His domain extended to the banks of the Jhelum River in Kahuta, where the border of his state met the Pakhtun state of Sudhnoti. It should be noted that this Sultan Syed Khan is also referred to in history as Saeed Khan. Since this small state was insufficient for Sultan Syed Khan, he, like his other successor brothers, began expanding his state by conquering neighboring areas. This expansion caused concern for Nawab Sardar Abdullah Khan Sadozai of Sudhnoti because his army was much smaller compared to that of Sultan Syed Khan Gakkhar.

Therefore, Nawab Sardar Abdullah Khan

decided to seek assistance from his fellow Afghan Sadozais in Malakand, Pakhtunkhwa, the land founded by Sultan Gaju Khan Sadozai. He recruited an army of 2,000 Abakhel Sadozai warriors from the military garrison in Swabi Handa and brought them to Sudhnoti. This army was stationed in the hilly outskirts of Sudhnoti at Brahminpura for two years due to fears of a potential attack by Sultan Syed Khan. However, Sultan Syed Khan Gakkhar, while expanding his state by attacking regions to his right and left, never attacked Sudhnoti.

During this time, the wise ruler of Sudhnoti, Sardar Abdullah Khan Abdal Sadozai, granted large tracts of land and financial support to the Abakhel Sadozai army that had come from Swabi Handa to settle permanently in Sudhnoti. Consequently, only a few dozen individuals from the 2,000 Abakhel Sadozais returned to Swabi, while the rest settled in various hilly outskirts of Brahminpura. After this settlement, the Brahmins of Brahminpura

began calling these hilly areas "Pland." The word "Pland" is derived from Sanskrit, meaning a wild tribe and one that speaks an incomprehensible and harsh language. This same "Pland" is what is known today as Plandri.

The first historian of Sudhnoti, Sardar Hafiz Waja Khan, writes that the first migration of the Pakhtun Abdal Sadozais occurred in the late 1406s, leading to the foundation of the Pakhtun state of Sudhnoti by Afghan Nawab Jassi Khan Abdal Sadozai in 1407. Whereas my ancestors migrated from Swabi Handa to Sudhnoti 130 years ago in 1560 as part of Nawab Sardar Abdullah Khan Abdal Sadozai's military campaign.

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE THIRD CAPITAL OF SUDHNOTI, FORT BAWAR (BARAL)

CHAPTER 10

After the foresighted ruler of Sudhnoti, Sardar Abdullah Khan Abdal Sadozai, passed away in 1564, his nephew and adopted son, Sardar Bawar Khan Abdal Sadozai, became the new ruler of Sudhnoti. He laid the foundation of Fort Bawar in 1570. Initially, the fort was small, with accommodations for 100 horses and up to 250 soldiers. However, after the death of Sardar Bawar Khan, the founder of Fort Bawar, in 1584, his eldest son, Sardar Saeed Khan-e-khanan Abdal Sadozai, a just, brave, and virtuous leader, ascended to the throne of Sudhnoti. Ten years after his father's death, in 1594, Sardar Saeed

Khan-e-khanan began the reconstruction of Fort Bawar, which was completed over 11 years in 1605. Following this, Nawab Saeed Khan-e-khanan moved the capital of Sudhnoti from Fort Khan-e-khanan to Fort Bawar. Fort Bawar remained the capital of Sudhnoti from the time of Sardar Saeed Khan-e-khanan Sadozai until the last ruler, Sardar Suba Khan Abakhel Sadozai. To this day, the fort is still referred to as Fort Baral in honor of Nawab Sudhnoti Sardar Bawar Khan Abdal Sadozai. During the Sudhan Rebellion of 1950, this fort served as the headquarters of the Sudhan rebels until 1956. According to the author of the book Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti, Sardar Suba Khan, Sardar Saeed Khan began the reconstruction of Fort Brahan (Bharand) in 1590. This fort was established as a military base for Sudhnoti in 1594. On the same day, Nawab Sardar Saeed Khan-e-khanan offered a charity(sadqa) of 100 oxen for the salvation of his great-grandfather, the founder of Fort Brahan, Sardar Brahan Khan Abdal Sadozai.❖

The third capital of Sudhnoti fort Bawar(Baral).

ROLE OF NAWAB SUDHNOTI SARDAR SAEED KHAN ABDAL SADOZAI IN THE MUGHAL-CHAK WAR OF KASHMIR

CHAPTER 11

The first historian of Sudhnoti, Sardar Hafiz Waja Khan, writes that the misfortune of the Chak rulers of Kashmir began on the day when Emperor Akbar came from Delhi to Lahore. On that day, Yaqub Shah Chak, the son of the ruler of Kashmir, Yousuf Shah, who had gained control of Kashmir from Loher Chak with Akbar's help, presented himself at Akbar's court in Lahore. He expressed his loyalty with great respect and sincerity. Seeing this, Akbar was pleased and expressed his desire to visit Kashmir. In

response, Yaqub Shah Chak invited Akbar to visit Kashmir.

Subsequently, Akbar sent Hakim Ali Gilani as an envoy from the Mughal court to Kashmir, expressing his intent to tour the region. However, when the Mughal envoys entered Kashmir, Yousuf Shah, the King of Kashmir, intended to welcome them outside his royal palace at a place called Thatta in Kashmir. But his courtiers, taking it as a matter of pride, stopped him from doing so. When Yousuf Shah became upset, his ministers Baba Mehdi and Shams Doula, who were considered the most powerful among all ministers, went so far as to say that if Yousuf Shah went out of the palace to greet the envoys, they would kill him on the spot and make his son the ruler of Kashmir.

Seeing the one-sided sentiments of his courtiers, ministers, and advisors, Yousuf Shah decided it was best to remain silent. When the Mughal envoys found no one to receive them upon entering Kashmir, they turned back and reported the entire situation to Emperor Akbar.

This angered Akbar greatly, and he ordered Shah Rukh Mirza, Shah Quli Khan, Raja Bhagwan Das, and Man Singh to prepare an army to attack Kashmir. The generals began gathering their armies at Gujarat, and the news quickly spread like wildfire that Emperor Akbar had decided to conquer the Kingdom of Kashmir. As this news spread, concern grew among the smaller independent states, including Sudhnoti, which were adjacent to the Kingdom of Kashmir.

In these circumstances, all the small independent states, fiefdoms, and free tribes near Kashmir came to Gujarat to present bestowment (nazrana) to Emperor Akbar. They pledged their loyalty and obedience, announcing their intention to fight alongside Akbar's army in the campaign against Kashmir.

In response, Akbar declared that the independence of these states, fiefdoms, and tribes near the Kingdom of Kashmir would be preserved, and their territories would be left under the control of their current rulers who

had voluntarily supported the Mughal army in the Kashmir campaign.

Hafiz Waja writes that in Gujarat, when Raja Man Singh introduced the army and commanders from the Gakkhar and Rajput fiefdoms to Emperor Akbar, and then introduced the Pakhtun state of Sudhnoti and its commander Nawab Saeed Khan Sadozai, Akbar exclaimed in awe, "Subhan Allah! A human settlement exists even in this mountainous strip between the Jhelum and Poonch rivers?" Impressed by the personal dignity of Nawab Saeed Khan Sadozai, Akbar bestowed upon him the title of "Khan-e-Khanan." Following this, Nawab Saeed Khan-e-Khanan, along with his 3,000-strong Pakhtun army from Sudhnoti, joined Akbar's campaign.

When Akbar's army, along with its allies, entered Kashmir, the army of Kashmir's ruler Yusuf Shah was ineffective against them. Subsequently, Yousuf Shah, through Raja Bhagwan Das, entered negotiations with Akbar's army and agreed to pay an annual

kharaj (land tax) to the Mughal Empire. After the negotiations with Akbar's nobles, Yousuf Shah appointed his son Yaqoob Shah as his successor and personally presented himself at Emperor Akbar's court. However, Emperor Akbar did not approve of this peace agreement, and in 995 AH, he sent Muhammad Qasim Mir Bahri on a campaign to Kashmir once again. Yaqoob Shah, the son of Yousuf Shah and the acting ruler of Kashmir at the time, put up fierce resistance against the Mughal army. However, he was soon defeated and fled towards the mountains. Yaqoob Shah took refuge in the mountains for a while, during which time the Mughal commander Muhammad Qasim Mir Bahri captured Srinagar and established Mughal rule by appointing his officials and governors in Kashmir.

After some time, Yaqoob Shah regrouped his scattered forces and confronted the Mughal governor Muhammad Qasim Mir Bahri. In this battle, many Mughal commanders were killed, and Muhammad Qasim Mir Bahri was forced to take refuge in

the Ark fort. He then sent a letter to Emperor Akbar requesting assistance. Akbar appointed Yousuf Khan Mashhadi as the new governor of Kashmir and summoned Muhammad Qasim back to his court.

When the Mughal army, led by Yousuf Khan Mashhadi, attacked Kashmir for the second time, Nawab Saeed Khan-e-khanan of Sudhnoti again supported the Mughal forces with his 3,000 troops. In this battle, Yousuf Khan Mashhadi emerged victorious, while Yaqoob Shah, after his defeat, went into hiding. However, after some time, Yousuf Khan Mashhadi found Yaqub Shah, convinced him, and sent him to join his father Yousuf Shah at Emperor Akbar's court. Akbar granted both Yousuf Shah and Yaqoob Shah large estates in the Bar region of India and included them among his courtiers.

From 1586 to 1751, the Kingdom of Kashmir remained a province of the Mughal Empire. Those feudal lords, including Sudhnoti, who had supported the Mughal army twice in the

Kashmir campaign, were informed by the Mughal court that their states would remain under their control as a reward for their service. The author of the book Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti, Sardar Suba Khan, writes that in the second Mughal-Chak war, when Nawab Saeed Khan-e-Khanan of Sudhnoti again fully supported the Mughal army, Emperor Akbar sent him two small mountain cannons, for the protection of Sudhnoti along with golden bracelets, and a crown. Additionally, a decree was issued from the Mughal court declaring Sudhnoti a tax-free zone.

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Nawab Saeed Khan-e-Khanan receiving two small mountain canons for the protection of Sudhnoti with a gold ring from the army chief of the Mughal Emperor Akbar

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION: THE REIGN OF NAWAB SARDAR SAEED KHAN-E-KHANAN ABDAL SADOZAI OF SUDHNOTI

CHAPTER 12

Nawab Sardar Saeed Khan-e-khanan Abdal Sadozai of Sudhnoti gained the honor of having the state of Sudhnoti included among the allied states of the Mughal Empire due to his active support of the Mughals during the two Mughal-Chak wars in Kashmir.

As a result, Nawab Saeed Khan-e-khanan proved to be a more successful ruler than other rulers of Sudhnoti. The first historian of Sudhnoti, Sardar Hafiz Waja Khan, writes that Sardar Saeed Khan-e-Khanan became far more famous due to his successful policies

compared to other rulers of Sudhnoti.

He established a regular army in Sudhnoti and set up a permanent military camp at Fort Brahan (present-day Bharand). He formally converted the special tax collectors into a regular army and began the reconstruction of the three forts that were known as the capitals of Sudhnoti. These forts were completed during his reign by 1605.

Nawab Saeed Khan-e-Khanan Sadozai was the first ruler of Sudhnoti who constructed easier pathways by cutting through forests and rocky hills in the narrow belt between Poonch and Jehlum river, creating mule and horse caravan routes to connect the fifteen mountainous units of Sudhnoti with the central Sudhnoti Fort, known as Fort Bawar (Baral).

Before this, there was no safe passage for mule and horse caravans across the fifteen mountains of Sudhnoti. Additionally, by 1590, Nawab Saeed Khan-e-Khanan facilitated the settlement of the Abakhel Sadozai Pakhtuns

in the areas of Banjosa and Rawalakot at his own expense.

The author of "Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti," Sardar Suba Khan, notes that Nawab Saeed Khan-e-Khanan was an extremely generous ruler who personally took responsibility for the care of orphans and widows. In short, considering the time, the reign of Nawab Sardar Saeed Khan-e-Khanan Abdal Sadozai of Sudhnoti is regarded as a golden era of progress and development.

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BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE CIVIL WAR IN SUDHNOTI DURING THE REIGN OF RAJAB SAEED SADOZAI

CHAPTER 13

After the death of Nawab Sardar Saeed Khan-e-Khanan Sadozai of Sudhnoti, his elder son, Sardar Rajab Saeed Khan Abdal Sadozai, became the new ruler of Sudhnoti. However, he proved to be entirely different from his father, showing a more individualistic and self-centered nature. Hafiz Waja Khan writes that Nawab Saeed Khan-e-Khanan had settled many families of the Abakhel Sadozai tribe in Shakra and Nasa in 1590. According to Sardar Suba Khan, the author of Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti, the former name of Banjosa was Shakra, and Rawalakot was previ-

ously known as Nasa. Nawab Saeed Khan-e-Khanan had settled the Abakhel Sadozais in these areas in 1590, and by 1625, thirty-four years had passed since then. Despite this, Nawab Sardar Rajab Saeed of Sudhnoti wanted to resettle these people back in Paland and then divide the areas of Shakra and Nasa among his family members. However, for a ruler as foolish as Rajab Saeed, this was not an easy task without a proper strategy.

As the dispute grew, it led to a conflict between the Abakhel Sadozais and Abdal Sadozai tribes, which eventually escalated into a war. From 1624 to 1626, the Abakhel Sadozais fought four battles against Nawab Sardar Rajab Saeed of Sudhnoti and his nephew, Sardar Mukarram Khan Sadozai. In the first battle of Paland, Nawab Sardar Rajab Saeed of Sudhnoti was killed along with his two sons, six brothers, and eight hundred companions by the Abakhel Sadozais. Afterward, the Abakhel Sadozais captured the capital of Sudhnoti, Fort Bawar (Baral). In this

battle, two hundred Abakhel Sadozais were also killed.

After seizing Fort Bawar (Baral), the Abakhel Sadozais installed their tribal chief, Sardar Alam Khan Sadozai, a highly aggressive leader, as the new Nawab of Sudhnoti and pledged their allegiance to him. According to Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti, Sardar Suba Khan writes that after capturing Fort Bawar and appointing Sardar Alam Khan Abakhel Sadozai as their ruler, he first took an oath with his companions to wipe out the Abdal Sadozais from existence during his coronation.

On the other hand, the Abdal Sadozais appointed Nawab Rajab Saeed's nephew, Sardar Mukarram Khan Abdal Sadozai, as the new Nawab of Sudhnoti at Fort Khan-e-Khanan. Following this, Sardar Alam Khan Sadozai attacked Fort Brahan (Bharand), where he lost four hundred of his men. In retaliation, he destroyed and burned several Abdal Sadozai settlements from Bharand to Holar with his defeated army.

This battle boosted the morale of Sardar Mukarram Khan Sadozai, who then attempted to attack Fort Baral, but Sardar Alam Khan Sadozai intercepted him on the way. The battle took place at a location between Paland and Holar, near a place called Kala, where Sardar Mukarram Khan was defeated. In this battle, five hundred of Sardar Mukarram Khan's companions were killed, forcing him to flee and take refuge at Fort Khan-e-Khanan. However, Sardar Mukarram Khan avenged his defeat by attacking the homes of the Abakhel Sadozai families in Banjosa and Rawalakot, who had migrated to Baral and Paland. He killed two hundred Abakhel Sadozais and burned their entire settlements to the ground. Following this, Sardar Alam Khan Sadozai laid siege to both Fort Khan-e-Khanan and Fort Brahan (Bharand) in preparation for a decisive battle against the Abdal Sadozai.

Hafiz Waja Khan writes that from 1624 to 1626, the Abakhel Sadozais and Abdal Sadozais engaged in four battles, resulting in

the deaths of 2,100 Pakhtuns, with hundreds more losing body parts. Additionally, hundreds of innocent Hindu Brahmins lost their lives, and their possessions were plundered without mercy during these two years. Eventually, Sardar Mukarram Khan Sadozai, weary of Sardar Alam Khan Sadozai's prolonged siege, sought the help of Khan Dirop Khan Badshah, a renowned scholar and spiritual leader of Sudhnoti. At that time, Khan Dirop Khan Badshah was revered as the spiritual guide for all Pakhtuns in Sudhnoti, so Khan Dirop Khan Badshah intervened and freed Sardar Mukarram Khan Sadozai from Sardar Alam Khan Sadozai's siege. This intervention led to the end of the civil war in Sudhnoti, which was ultimately achieved through the establishment of Khan Dirop Khan Badshah's rule over Sudhnoti.

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Sardar Alam Khan Abakhel Sadozai.

BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE RULE OF BABA KHAN DIROP KHAN BADSHAH IN SUDHNOTI

CHAPTER 14

Baba Dirop Badshah's real name was Khan Dirop Khan, and he came to be known as "Badshah" after assuming rulership over Sudhnoti. His tomb is located in the village of Dhaman Gala in the Baloch Tehsil of the present-day Sudhnoti district in Azad Kashmir. He is widely known as "Baba-e-Sudhnoti Dirop Badshah." Baba Dirop gained rulership of Sudhnoti as a result of the defeat of Nawab Sardar Rajab Saeed by the Abakhel Sadozais in a series of battles. These were not just one, but four bloody wars that ended the 221-year reign of Nawab Jassi Khan Abdal

Sadozai, the founder of the Pakhtun state of Sudhsnoti, and his descendants, along with other Abdal Sadozais.

Regarding the background of this war, Sudhnoti's first historian, Sardar Hafiz Waja Khan, writes that Nawab Sardar Rajab Saeed of Sudhnoti, who proved to be the most incompetent ruler of Sudhnoti, attempted to remove the Abakhel Sadozai families, whom his righteous, just, and compassionate father, Nawab Sardar Saeed Khan-e-Khanan Sadozai, had settled in Shakra and Nasa in 1590. Nawab Rajab Saeed sought to relocate these Abakhel Sadozai back to Paland (present-day Palandri) and divide the areas of Shakra and Nasa among his family members. This dispute led to two years of fighting between the Abakhel Sadozai and Abdal Sadozai, resulting in the deaths of Nawab Sardar Rajab Saeed Khan and hundreds of other Abdal Sadozai because the Abakhel Sadozai outnumbered the Abdal Sadozai by five to one in Sudhnoti. Consequently, the Abdal Sadozai faced defeat

on every front, leading Nawab Sardar Rajab Saeed's nephew, Sardar Mukarram Khan Abdal Sadozai, to retreat to Fort Brahan (present-day Bharand) and Fort Khan-e-Khanan. Desperate, Sardar Mukarram Khan Abdal Sadozai sent several envoys to negotiate with Sardar Alam Khan Abakhel Sadozai, but Sardar Alam Khan was unwilling to negotiate.

He maintained a three-month siege of Fort Aain and Fort Brahan, causing severe shortages of food and water among Sardar Mukarram Khan's companions. Fearing Sardar Alam Khan's ruthless intentions, Sardar Mukarram Khan's followers urged him to surrender the government of Sudhnoti and the two forts to Sardar Alam Khan Abakhel Sadozai in exchange for their lives.

Seeing the dire situation of his people, the brave and capable Nawab Sardar Mukarram Khan Abdal Sadozai sought the help of Khan Dirop Khan Badshah, a renowned scholar and spiritual leader of Sudhnoti at the time, who was revered as the spiritual guide for all

Pakhtuns in Sudhnoti. In response to Mukarram Khan Sadozai's invitation, Khan Dirop Khan Badshah first met with Sardar Mukarram Khan Sadozai at Fort Aain and then with Sardar Alam Khan Sadozai at Fort Bawar (Baral), where he successfully negotiated a truce.

Afterward, Baba Khan Dirop Badshah invited his thousands of followers from Sudhnoti, along with Sardar Alam Khan Sadozai and Sardar Mukarram Khan Sadozai, to attend a Loya Jirga at Fort Brahan (present-day Bharand). Sardar Suba Khan, the author of Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti, writes that the Loya Jirga was held on the 10th March 1626 at Fort Brahan. During the assembly, Baba Khan Dirop Badshah began with the recitation of the Holy Quran and praises of Allah, followed by a speech in which he requested both Sardar Mukarram Khan and Sardar Alam Khan to relinquish their claims to the rulership of Sudhnoti. He then sought the opinions of the remaining chieftains regarding the appoint-

ment of a new ruler for Sudhnoti.

When it was Sardar Mukarram Khan Sadozai's turn to speak, he announced his decision to transfer his authority to Baba Dirop Badshah and step down from his position as ruler of Sudhnoti. Following this, Sardar Alam Khan Abakhel Sadozai also announced his decision to transfer his rulership to Baba Dirop Badshah and step down as well. Subsequently, four thousand chieftains of Sudhnoti simultaneously raised the slogan of allegiance to Baba Khan Dirop Badshah as their new ruler.

Sardar Suba Khan records that the resounding slogan of allegiance by the four thousand chieftains filled the court of Fort Brahan. On the 10th of March 1626, the chieftains of Sudhnoti unanimously appointed Baba Khan Dirop Khan Badshah as the new ruler of Sudhnoti. From that point on, the people of Sudhnoti began to refer to him with the title "Badshah" (King).

Baba Khan Dirop Badshah chose to retain

Fort Bawar (present-day Baral) as the capital of Sudhnoti, but he seldom resided there. Instead, he spent most of his time traveling throughout Sudhnoti for preaching and spiritual guidance. When not traveling, he resided in his place of worship in the village of Dhaman Gala Sharif.

The day-to-day affairs of the government were managed by his eldest son, Sardar Daniyal Khan Abakhel Sadozai, whom Baba Dirop appointed as the Diwan of Sudhnoti. He managed all the affairs of the Sudhnoti government, but Baba Khan Dirop was never negligent in his governance. His rule lasted for twenty-three years and six months. After Baba Khan Dirop, his descendants, Sardar Shams Khan Abakhel Sadozai and Sardar Suba Khan Abakhel Sadozai, ruled over Sudhnoti. Sardar Shams Khan and Sardar Suba Khan were first cousins, and during Sardar Shams Khan's reign, Sardar Suba Khan served as the Diwan of Sudhnoti.

Sardar Suba Khan was the last ruler of

Sudhnoti. He also authored the history of Sudhnoti under the title "Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti". The first writer to document the history of Sudhnoti was Sardar Hafiz Waja Khan Abakhel Sadozai, who wrote Dirop Nama, detailing the history of the rulers of Sudhnoti. All three-Sardar Shams Khan, Sardar Suba Khan, and Hafiz Waja Khan-belonged to the Miraal lineage, descendants of Sardar Mir Khan, the son of Baba Dirop.

Other notable figures in this lineage include the famous generals of Sudhnoti: Sardar Sabz Ali Khan, Sardar Milli Khan, Sardar Rai Wali Khan, Sardar Shahdad Khan, Sardar Raj Wali Khan, Sardar Muhammad Khan, Sardar Mehdi Khan, and Sardar Mansoor Khan, who were all flayed (had their skin peeled alive) in the third Sikh-Sudhnoti war of 1832.

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Sardar Mir Khan Abakhel Sadozai , the middle son of Baba-e-Dirop, is the ancestor from whom the famous Miral branch of the Dirop family descends.

BABA DIROP BADSHAH'S LAW OF SUDHNOTI DIVISION: A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 15

When Baba Dirop was appointed as the new ruler of Sudhnoti by Nawab Sardar Alam Khan Sadozai and Nawab Sardar Mukarram Khan Sadozai after they abdicated their governments in Sudhnoti, his priority was to establish peace and order throughout the region. Baba Khan Dirop conducted extensive preaching tours across Sudhnoti, encouraging the Pakhtun population to live in unity and harmony, which had a profound impact on the people. A year after assuming power, during the annual Loya Jirga in the month of Vaisakhi

1627, Baba Dirop presented a constitutional code for Sudhnoti, consisted of the following articles:

Article 1:

Geographically, Sudhnoti, a Pakhtun state comprising fifteen mountains, was to be divided among fifteen chiefs. The division was based on the population ratio between the Abakhel Sadozais and the Abdal Sadozais. Accordingly, the six mountains adjacent to the Jhelum River were allocated to the six Sadozai chiefs of the Abdal clan, while the eight mountains adjacent to the Poonch River were allocated to the eight Sadozai chiefs of the Abakhel clan. The central region of Sudhnoti, including the three forts that constituted the capital of Sudhnoti and 40% of the remaining land, was designated as the territory of Central Sudhnoti. The fifteen mountain chiefs were made subordinate to Central Sudhnoti, specifically under the authority of the Fort of Bawar (present-day Barl). As a sign of their allegiance, these fifteen mountain chiefs were

required to present twelve sheep or goats, each older than one year, to the central authority at the Fort of Bawar (Barl) annually.

Article 2:

Under the monetary tax system established by Nawab Saeed Khan-e-Khanan Sadozai of Sudhnoti, a revision is made both in the central region of Sudhnoti and its fifteen units. Previously, the annual monetary tax imposed on all non-Muslim married individuals was three sheep or goats and for every married Pakhtun it was a sheep or goat per annum. However, this law was deemed unjust. Therefore, from this day forward, every married individual living in Central Sudhnoti or on the fifteen mountains-whether Hindu or Muslim, including Pakhtun Muslims-will be required to pay two sheep or goats annually as a monetary tax to the Khan of their respective area.

Article 3:

The division of Sudhnoti into fifteen units will be conducted in the presence of four

thousand Pakhtuns. After this division, no chief will be allowed to collect taxes from another chief's territory or use the grazing lands of another chief's area for their livestock. If any chief commits this offense, the complaint must first be lodged at the central Sudhnoti Fort of Bawar. Following this, all the chiefs representing the fifteen units of Sudhnoti will gather in a Jirga to discuss the nature of the crime and decide on a punishment. The punishment could include stripping the offending chief of their territory.

After presenting this constitution in the Loya Jirga, Baba Dirop asked the assembled chiefs three times in a loud voice, "Are all the chiefs of Sudhnoti prepared to unanimously implement and uphold this division and law?" In response, all the chiefs of Sudhnoti, with great joy and enthusiasm, replied with a resounding "Labbaik, Labbaik" (We accept, we accept).

Baba Dirop then took the hands of the fifteen chiefs of Sudhnoti in his own and offered

a prayer and a curse, saying, "O Allah, if these chiefs of Sudhnoti adhere to this system and law with integrity, may their rule be preserved in their generations with peace and prosperity. But if they betray me and this oath, make them a sign of disgrace in this world."

After this prayer, Baba Dirop divided sixty percent of Sudhnoti among the fifteen chiefs and allocated the remaining forty percent to Central Sudhnoti and the Fort of Bawar.

Following this division and constitution making, the Brahmins of Sudhnoti bestowed upon him the title of "Rahat," meaning "comfort and joy," because they were the most pleased with his just governance. That is why not only the Brahmins give him this title but many Soodan Brahmins also embraced Islam at his hands.

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Baba-e-Khan Dirop Badshah Abakhel Sadozai, the famous ruler of Sudhnoti.

BABA-E-RAHAT DIROP'S ABDICATION FROM THE SADHANOTI GOVERNMENT

CHAPTER 16

In the previous chapter, it was explained that Baba-e-Khan Dirop was offered the rulership of Sudhnoti because of the internal conflict among the Pakhtuns in Sudhnoti. The two Nawab rulers of Sudhnoti, Sardar Mukarram Khan Abdal Sadozai and Nawab Sardar Alam Khan Abakhel Sadozai, themselves presented the rulership to Baba-e-Rahat Dirop to resolve this conflict. Additionally, all the other Pakhtun chieftains in Sudhnoti also considered Baba-e-Rahat Dirop to be the savior who could bring an end to the war. Therefore, they

unanimously entrusted the governance of Sudhnoti to him. However, Baba-e-Dirop had no prior involvement in politics or any leadership role among the Pakhtun tribes.

His primary focus was on religious preaching, and he was a scholar of his time, who spent most of his days and nights engaged in worship and spiritual practices. Consequently, he was renowned among the Pakhtuns of Sudhnoti as a pious, devout, and saintly figure, and all the Pakhtuns and other Muslims of the region had pledged allegiance to him due to this reputation. According to Sardar Suba Khan, the author of Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti, when Baba-e-Dirop was given the rulership of Sudhnoti, he appointed his very obedient son, Sardar Daniyal Khan Sadozai, as the Diwan of Sudhnoti and sent him to the central Sudhnoti fort of Bawar. Meanwhile, Baba-e-Dirop spent six months of the year in worship at a place he had selected for himself in his village, Dhaman Gala Sharif, and the remaining six months were dedicated to the continued preaching of Islam throughout Sudhnoti.

After ruling Sudhnoti for twenty-three years, Baba-e-Dirop observed that all the inhabitants of Sudhnoti were loyal to the central government and that peace and order had been established in all regions. He then decided to once again renounce worldly affairs. After burying the sword and shield he had taken up during his rule with his own hands, he announced his abdication from the central government of Sudhnoti, even though there was no one more capable than him to lead at that time.

Baba-e-Rahat Dirop's son, Sardar Daniyal Khan Sadozai, who at that time was a teacher of Arabic and Persian and served as the Diwan of Sudhnoti during his father's rule, was not given the rulership by his father. Instead, after establishing complete peace and order in Sudhnoti, Baba-e-Dirop handed over the central government to Sardar Bahadur Khan, the eldest son of Sardar Alam Khan Sadozai. However, Sardar Bahadur Khan, who was as proud and courageous as his father, initially refused to accept the central government. But when Baba-e-Dirop

bestowed his blessings upon Sardar Bahadur Khan and offered him the rulership of the Sudhnoti center, Bahadur Khan Abakhel Sadozai willingly accepted it.

After taking charge, Sardar Bahadur Khan requested Baba-e-Dirop to allow his elder son, Sardar Daniyal Khan Sadozai, to continue as the central Diwan of Sudhnoti, a position he held during his father's reign. Baba-e-Dirop agreed to this request because he knew that Sardar Bahadur Khan, like his father Sardar Alam Khan, was an extremely emotional person who would benefit from the support of a learned, capable, and trustworthy individual. Therefore, Baba-e-Dirop appointed his eldest son, Sardar Daniyal Sadozai, who had served as the Diwan during his own rule in Sudhnoti, as the Diwan under Sardar Bahadur Khan as well.

Sardar Daniyal Khan Sadozai was a scholar of his time, and his mausoleum is located in the village of Dhaman, near the site known as "Raqba Mahal Moora". To this day, he is remembered by the title of "Baba-e-Diwan." ❖

Sardar Daniyal Abakhel Sadozai, the elder son of Baba-e-Dirop and ruler and dewan of Sudhnoti.

A BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF NAWAB SARDAR SARBULAND KHAN SADOZAI'S RULE IN SUDHNOTI

CHAPTER 17

Sardar Sarbuland Khan Abakhel Sadozai was the great-grandson of Sardar Bahadur Khan Abakhel Sadozai and the son of Nawab Sardar Jamal Khan Sadozai. Sardar Bahadur Khan Sadozai was granted the rulership of Sudhnoti by Baba-e-Rahat Dirop Badshah in 1650, along with a prayer that if he and his descendants remained well-wishers of the people of the Sudhnoti center and its fifteen units, Allah would continue to bestow upon them the governance of Sudhnoti. However, the day they abandoned this well-wishing, they would be handed over to merciless people from whom they would never receive kindness. Keeping this prayer in mind,

Nawab Bahadur Khan Sadozai and his descendants always prioritized the rights of the people of Sudhnoti, which allowed his lineage to rule over Sudhnoti for 160 years. History bears witness that as long as Nawab Bahadur Khan and his descendants adhered to the advice of the saintly Baba-e-Rahat Dirop, they continued to benefit from his prayer.

Among the descendants of Nawab Bahadur Khan Sadozai, Sardar Sarbuland Khan Sadozai achieved the greatest prominence. He became the ruler of the Sudhnoti center in 1749 after the death of his father, Sardar Jamal Khan Abakhel Sadozai. Sardar Sarbuland Khan, prioritizing his familial ties over personal interests, sided with the Afghans in the Afghan-Mughal War in Kashmir with a force of five thousand soldiers. As a result, he became highly favored by Ahmad Shah Durrani, who appointed him as the acting Subedar of Kashmir for a few months in 1758. Furthermore, during their rule over Kashmir, Ahmad Shah Durrani and his descendants always respected the borders of

Sardar Sarbuland Khan's Pakhtun state of Sudhnoti. This was because a relationship of friendship and brotherhood had been established between Sardar Sarbuland Khan's state and the Durrani Empire.

Nawab Sardar Sarbuland Khan Sadozai supported Ahmad Shah Durrani in the Battle of Panipat and in every campaign against the Sikhs of Punjab. In recognition of his support, Ahmad Shah Durrani not only granted him forty thousand rupees in silver after the attack on the Sikhs of Punjab but also gave him three mountain cannons to protect and defend Sudhnoti.

This friendship and brotherhood between the Sudhnoti and the Durrani Empire lasted for a continuous 66 years. Sardar Sarbuland Khan's rule over the Sudhnoti center spanned from 1749 to 1785. According to Sardar Suba Khan, Sardar Sarbuland Khan Sadozai was an extraordinarily brave and hasty ruler. Due to his lineage as the great-grandson of Nawab Alam Khan Abakhel Sadozai, he was also referred to as "Aalim-e-Sani". ❖

Sardar Sarbuland Khan Abakhel Sadozai receiving three small mountain canons from Afghan king Ahmad Shah Durrani for the protection of Sudhnoti.

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE END OF 160 YEARS OF RULE BY THE DESCENDANTS OF SARDAR BAHADUR KHAN ABAKHEL SADOZAI IN SUDHNOTI

CHAPTER 18

The descendants of Sardar Bahadur Khan Abakhel Sadozai ruled over Sudhnoti for 160 years. According to "Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti", authored by Sardar Suba Khan, when the ruler Baba-e-Dirop granted the governance of Sudhnoti to Sardar Bahadur Khan Sadozai, he took Bahadur Khan's hands in his own and prayed to Allah, asking that as long as Bahadur Khan and his descendants remain loyal to the welfare of Sudhnoti and its fifteen units, may the governance of Sudhnoti remain in their family.

However, if they abandon this loyalty, may they be subjected to such merciless people from whom they would receive no kindness.

This prayer was fulfilled as long as Sardar Bahadur Khan Sadozai and his descendants adhered to the advice of a saintly figure. The family continued to benefit from the blessings of Baba-i-Dirop's prayer. However, when they chose to abandon this guidance and instead adopted the practice of mischief in the land, they were subjected to divine retribution. This punishment began upon the death of the just and brave ruler, Sardar Sarbuland Khan Abakhel Sadozai. After his death, his foolish and wayward eldest son, Sardar Rais Khan Abakhel Sadozai, took over the rule of Sudhnoti.

Sardar Suba Khan, the author of Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti, describes Sardar Rais Khan as a romantic, selfish, and extremely foolish ruler who had fifteen marriages. Upon becoming the ruler of Sudhnoti, Sardar Rais Khan abolished the annual monetary tax of two sheep

or goats per married man that Baba-i-Dirop had established 135 years earlier. Instead, he introduced a new tax of four sheep or goats per married man annually. He also began to push for increased taxes on the other units of Sudhnoti, convening several loya jirgas in the center for this purpose. Eventually, he succeeded in mandating that the chiefs of all the units would now have to contribute seventy sheep or goats annually to the center of Sudhnoti, instead of the previous twelve. However, even after this, Sardar Rais Khan's desires continued to grow day by day.

According to “Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti” by Sardar Suba Khan, during the rule of Sardar Rais Khan, the Diwan (chief administrator) of Sudhnoti was Sardar Mulla Ehsan Khan Sadozai. He was the Arabic and Persian teacher of Sardar Rais Khan's father, Sarbuland Khan Sadozai, and other notable Pakhtun chiefs, including Sardar Shams Khan and Sardar Rais Khan. However, tired of Rais Khan's immoral behavior, Mulla Ehsan Khan resigned

from his position as Diwan of Sudhnoti. Despite being an elderly man and a respected teacher of hundreds of Pakhtuns in Sudhnoti, Sardar Rais imprisoned him and appointed Sardar Shams Khan as the new Diwan.

A few years later, Sardar Shams Khan invited Nawab Rais Khan to the wedding of his cousin in his village, Dhaman. During the wedding, Sardar Rais Khan fell in love with the bride of Sardar Shams Khan's cousin. Although he remained silent during the wedding, the very next day, he demanded that Sardar Rab Nawaz Khan, the groom, divorce his new wife. When Sardar Rab Nawaz Khan refused, Sardar Rais Khan sent Sardar Shams Khan to intimidate or persuade his cousin to comply. However, considering it a matter of honor, Sardar Shams Khan sent his cousin, Sardar Rab Nawaz Khan, and his wife, Baswa Bibi, to his maternal grandfather's fort in Mang.

It is important to note that Sardar Mukhtiar Khan Sadozai, the maternal grandfather of Sardar Shams Khan, was the great-grandson

of Sardar Aku Khan Sadozai, who had been granted leadership over one of Sudhnoti's fifteen units by Baba-i-Dirop in 1627. At that time, Sardar Mukhtiar Khan and his son, Sardar Farooq Sadozai, ruled this unit. Sardar Mukhtiar Khan was the maternal grandfather of Sardar Shams Khan, while Sardar Farooq Sadozai was his uncle and father-in-law. They had built a small fort in their region, similar to other chiefs in Sudhnoti, from where they administered their unit. Sardar Shams Khan wrote a letter to his cousin, Sardar Rab Nawaz Khan, and sent it to Fort Mang. He then returned to Fort Bawar and informed Nawab Rais Khan that Sardar Rab Nawaz and his bride had gone into hiding and would be found soon.

However, the truth about this matter was revealed to Sardar Rais Khan two days later because Sardar Rais Khan had also kept several unscrupulous friends who informed Sardar Rais Khan that Sardar Rab Nawaz and his bride, Baswa Bibi, had been sent to Fort Mang

by Sardar Shams Khan. Consequently, Sardar Rais Khan imprisoned his Diwan, Sardar Shams Khan, and immediately sent a messenger with a letter to Sardar Mukhtiar at Fort Mang. The letter stated that Sardar Rab Nawaz and his wife were rebels against the central authority of Sudhnoti and were being sheltered by Sardar Mukhtiar. The message warned that if they were not handed over, Sardar Mukhtiar should be prepared to face the consequences.

Upon receiving the threatening letter, Sardar Mukhtiar and Sardar Farooq informed Sardar Rais Khan's messenger that Sardar Rab Nawaz and his wife had left after staying just one night and had moved to another chief's protection in Sudhnoti. They emphasized that had they known Rab Nawaz was a rebel against the central authority, they would never have allowed him to stay. Sardar Mukhtiar Sadozai wrote a letter to Sardar Rais in his defense and sent it back with the messenger, but this did not satisfy Sardar Rais

Khan.

According to Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti by Sardar Suba Khan, when the messenger returned to the Bawar Fort empty-handed with only the letter in the late afternoon, Sardar Rais Khan flew into a rage. That evening, he mobilized his 2,000-strong army and marched towards Mang. Sardar Rais had likely calculated that a surprise night attack on Fort Mang would easily allow him to capture Sardar Mukhtiar, Sardar Farooq, Rab Nawaz, and Baswa Bibi, after which he could eliminate them all, as the fort lacked significant defenses such as artillery, high walls, or a professional army. Confident in this belief, Sardar Rais fearlessly advanced towards Mang.

Meanwhile, at Fort Mang, Sardar Mukhtiar Khan was unconcerned, assuming that the central authority would only make a decision after convening a Jirga with the chiefs of the other units in Sudhnoti. He believed that the center did not have the authority to attack any unit without consulting the other chiefs. This

belief was also rooted in the fact that, according to the constitution of Sudhnoti, the central authority could only attack a rebellious unit after a jirga's decision. However, under the foolish rule of Sardar Rais, the constitution of Sudhnoti held no value-he imposed his own laws instead.

Sardar Rais believed that Sardar Sarbuland Khan Sadozai's state of Sudhnoti, being recognized as an ally of the Durrani Empire, was surrounded by Afghan governance on all sides, thus facing no external threats. Furthermore, within Sudhnoti, no unit other than the central authority possessed a standing army, allowing him to act with impunity. However, Sardar Rais's delusions were shattered when opposition against him grew even within his own center. The dissent was so widespread that when he expressed his intention to gather his forces and launch a night attack on Fort Mang, a secret follower of Sardar Shams Khan, a spy named Sardar Gul Nazir, quickly traveled to Fort Mang to warn them of the impending

attack.

Upon receiving the warning, Sardar Mukhtiar and Sardar Farooq immediately evacuated all valuable belongings from the fort and positioned a thousand-armed gunmen and archers around the fort. As Sardar Rais's army advanced without fear and reached the moat of the fort, Sardar Mukhtiar and Sardar Farooq's forces opened fire with bullets and arrows. In the ensuing battle, 300 of Sardar Rais Khan's horsemen were killed, along with 40 mules, and Sardar Rais himself was also killed. Terrified by the sudden night assault, Sardar Rais's army fled in all directions.

By dawn, after a few hours, the remnants of Sardar Rais's army, scattered in the fields of Mang, began to regroup. Within two hours, a force of 1,700 soldiers was assembled. Sardar Ramzan, the army's commander, led them back to the site of the battle. Upon arrival, they discovered that Sardar Mukhtiar and Sardar Farooq's forces had already retreated into the mountains, along with the entire vil-

lage from the Mang valley. In the moat of Fort Mang, the bodies of Sardar Rais and his 300 soldiers lay riddled with bullets and arrows.

Seeing all this, Sardar Ramzan ordered his troops to loot Fort Mang, but upon entering, they found that not a single valuable item remained. Disheartened, Sardar Ramzan decided to take the bodies of Sardar Rais and the other fallen soldiers back to the central fort. However, before he could do so, a secret follower of Sardar Shams Khan, named Jan Muhammad Sadozai, spread a false rumor at Fort Bawar that Sardar Ramzan had betrayed them, causing Sardar Rais and the rest of the troops to be killed. This rumor enraged the sons of Sardar Rais, who were incited against Sardar Ramzan. Consequently, they assembled another army from the central authority of Sudhnoti and marched towards Mang.

Meanwhile, as soon as the sons of Sardar Rais left, the followers of Sardar Shams Khan found Fort Bawar empty. Seeing this as an opportunity, they freed Sardar Shams Khan

and the other prisoners from the jail and headed towards Sardar Shams Khan's ancestral village of Dhaman. On the other hand, Sardar Ramzan, carrying the bodies of Sardar Rais and the 300 fallen soldiers, had just reached near Pallandri when Sardar Sikandar, the son of Sardar Rais, joined forces with Sardar Ramzan. Upon seeing his father's body, Sardar Sikandar, without any investigation, accused Sardar Ramzan of betrayal and attempted to arrest him. This led to a confrontation in which Sardar Ramzan killed Sardar Sikandar and his two uncles on the spot. As a result, the army split into two factions near Pallandri.

Sardar Ramzan, realizing the gravity of the situation, began to flee with his loyal soldiers. Sardar Rais's loyalist army mistakenly believed that Sardar Ramzan was fleeing from the central authority. However, being a seasoned military general, Sardar Ramzan managed to outmaneuver them. He quickly returned to the central fort of Sudhnoti, Fort Bawar, and found

it completely deserted. Sardar Ramzan and his small force immediately seized control of the fort and sealed it off from all sides.

When the remaining sons of Sardar Rais and other loyalists heard that Sardar Ramzan had taken control of the fort, they rushed towards it in a frenzy. Sardar Ramzan ordered his troops to remain silent and hidden until Sardar Rais's sons and their army were at the fort's main gate. The silence inside the fort led someone to mistakenly inform Sardar Rais's sons that the fort was empty, and that the news of its capture was false. Believing this, the sons of Sardar Rais led their army right up to the fort's gate. At that moment, Sardar Ramzan, having positioned his forces strategically, unleashed a devastating artillery barrage on them, killing a thousand soldiers loyal to Sardar Rais's sons almost instantly.

The author of "Maakhaz Sudhnoti," Sardar Suba Khan, writes that in a short time in front of Fort Bawar, Sardar Ramzan killed a thousand soldiers who supported the sons of

Sardar Rais, among whom were 19 sons of Sardar Rais and 150 members of Sardar Bahadur Khan's family. Sardar Ramzan had around 500 soldiers. After this bloodshed, the remaining members of Sardar Bahadur Khan's family and their supporters fled the central authority and took refuge in Fort Brahan.

The author further states that in just three days of fighting, 1,500 people were killed in the central Sudhnoti. After being freed from the jail at Fort Bawar, Sardar Shams Khan stayed for two days in Vipri at Fort Dhaman. He then marched towards Mang with his army, where he met his maternal grandfather and uncle. There, he learned that Sardar Rais had been killed in a night attack by the central army three days prior. He also discovered that while transporting the bodies of Sardar Rais and others back to the central authority, Sardar Ramzan was intercepted near Palandri by Sardar Sikandar, the son of Sardar Rais. Sardar Sikandar accused Sardar Ramzan of treachery and attempted to arrest him, lead-

ing to a clash in which two of Sardar Rais's sons and 40 others, including some relatives, were killed. Sardar Ramzan then fled and seized Fort Bawar, which had been left undefended.

This led to another battle that same evening between the forces supporting Sardar Rais's sons and Sardar Ramzan at Fort Bawar. In this battle, 19 of Sardar Rais's sons, 150 members of Sardar Bahadur Khan's family, and 1,000 of their supporters were killed. As of three days later, Sardar Ramzan still held control of Fort Bawar.

Upon hearing this news, Sardar Shams Khan, a capable statesman of the central authority, immediately sent letters to the chiefs of Sudhnoti's 15 factions, inviting them to a Grand Jirga (Loya Jirga) at Fort Mang due to the emergency situation. The next day, all the chiefs of Sudhnoti's 15 factions gathered at Fort Mang at Sardar Shams Khan's invitation. During the Jirga, Sardar Shams Khan reminded them that 187 years ago, his great-

grandfather, Baba-e-Rahat Dirop Badshah, had divided Sudhnoti into 15 equal factions among their great-grandfathers, allowing them to govern their regions independently and prosperously. Baba-e-Dirop had granted the central authority of Sudhnoti to Sardar Bahadur Khan and his descendants, who had ruled justly and maintained peace for 160 years. However, the descendants of Sardar Bahadur Khan had now strayed from Baba-e-Dirop's teachings, resulting in four days of bloodshed in the central authority.

Sardar Shams Khan argued that it was their duty to convene a Grand Jirga at the central authority and elect a new ruler, as none of Sardar Bahadur Khan's descendants were fit to rule. Following this, Sardar Shams Khan's maternal grandfather, Sardar Mukhtar Khan Sadozai, addressed the Jirga, recalling that when Baba-e-Dirop had granted the central authority of Sudhnoti to Sardar Bahadur Khan, he had prayed that as long as Sardar Bahadur Khan and his descendants remained loyal to

Sudhnoti and its 15 factions, they would continue to rule. However, if they strayed from this path, they would fall into the hands of merciless people who would show them no mercy. He pointed out that the current situation was a direct consequence of Sardar Bahadur Khan's descendants abandoning Baba-e-Dirop's teachings, leading to their downfall. Today, being afflicted by the wrath of the Almighty, the descendants of Bahadur Khan Sadozai are hiding their faces in shame and wandering from place to place so that no one recognizes them and kills them. Therefore, we all should end this bloody game that has been going on at the center for the last four days and hand over the government of the center to its rightful heir, Sardar Shams Khan, the great-grandson of Baba-e-Dirop.

Recognizing Sardar Shams Khan's strength and the power of his maternal grandfather, the chiefs of Sudhnoti's 15 factions all expressed their desire to hand over the central authority to Sardar Shams Khan. Sardar Shams

Khan then sent a delegation to meet Sardar Ramzan. The brave and proud General Sardar Ramzan Khan Abakhel Sadozai, who had been fortified in Fort Bawar for four days, met with the delegation and, later that day, arrived at Fort Mang with his small army to pledge allegiance to Sardar Shams Khan.

Subsequently, when Sardar Khudud Khan Sadozai, the commander of Fort aain, learned of Sardar Ramzan's pledge to Sardar Shams Khan, he also agreed to hand over Fort aain to Sardar Shams Khan on the condition that he would retain his command of the fort. Sardar Shams Khan promised to keep him in command and immediately sent his army to seize both Forts, bringing them under his control.

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Sardar Ishaq Khan Abakhel Sadozai, the ruler of Sudhnoti and father of Sardar Shams Khan Abakhel Sadozai.

A BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF SARDAR SHAMS KHAN ABAKHEL SADOZAI'S RULE IN SUDHNOTI

CHAPTER 19

Sardar Shams Khan was born in the village of Dhaman in the Baloch Tehsil of present-day Sudhnoti district in Azad Kashmir. He belonged to the Miral branch of the lineage of Baba Khan Dirop Khan Badshah. Sardar Shams Khan's rule over central Sudhnoti was a result of the internal conflict between the government of central Sudhnoti and its military, which was sparked by the misconduct of Nawab Sudhnoti Sardar Rais Khan.

The conflict led to the near annihilation of Nawab Sudhnoti Sardar Rais Khan's family,

with nearly 99% of Sardar Bahadur Khan's family and their supporters killed by their own military under the command of General Sardar Ramzan Khan, who subsequently took control of central Sudhnoti.

The survivors of Sardar Bahadur Khan's family and their supporters were imprisoned in the Fort Brahan (now Brahan) as punishment for the misconduct of Sardar Rais Khan. Meanwhile, the Loya Jirga (Grand Assembly) of Sudhnoti's fifteen units decided to appoint Sardar Shams Khan as the ruler of central Sudhnoti just two days before his coronation, during a Loya Jirga at Fort Mang. Observing these developments, Sardar Ramzan Khan, who had taken control of central Sudhnoti, also pledged allegiance to Sardar Shams Khan at Mang.

Following this, the fort commander of Fort aain, Sardar Khudood Khan Sadozai, opened the fort's gates to Sardar Shams Khan's army, leading to the capture of both Fort aain and the central Fort Bawar. Sardar Shams Khan

then moved to central Sudhnoti at Fort Bawar, where he first released the women and children of Sardar Rais and Sardar Bahadur Khan's families from imprisonment.

After meeting with them, he allowed them to return to Fort Brahan under the protection of his guards. Sardar Shams Khan also sent a written letter to the heirs of Sardar Bahadur Khan, assuring them of safety and inviting them to attend his coronation at the central Loya Jirga.

This invitation was accepted by the heirs of Bahadur Khan and Sardar Sarbuland Khan, with twenty members from Sardar Bahadur Khan's family attending the Loya Jirga at Fort Bawar. The chiefs of fifteen units of Sudhnoti gathered at Fort Bawar in the Loya Jirga and held Sardar Shams Khan's coronation ceremony on 17th December 1810, marking the begin-ning of his rule over central Sudhnoti.

However, Sardar Shams Khan did not consider Fort Bawar auspicious for his rule, as the previous rulers had met tragic ends there. The

last ruler from the family of Nawab Jassi Khan, Nawab Rajab Saeed, was killed in Fort Bawar along with his brothers, sons, and an army of eight hundred, marking the humiliating end of their family's 219-year rule. Similarly, the 160-year rule of Sardar Bahadur Khan's family also ended with the death of Sardar Rais Khan, his entire family, and an army of one thousand in Fort Bawar.

Considering this, although Sardar Shams Khan had access to the Fort Dipri in his ancestral village Dhaman, he chose not to establish it as the capital because Dhaman was located on the border of Sudhnoti, not its center. Instead, he moved the capital to Fort Mang, where he had always found success and goodwill, and appointed his cousin Sardar Ibrahim Khan Sadozai's eldest son, Sardar Suba Khan Abakhel Sadozai, as the Diwan (administrator) of Sudhnoti. Thus, Sardar Shams Khan began his rule of Sudhnoti from Fort Mang.

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Sardar Ibrahim Khan Abakhel Sadozai

The Genealogy of the Ruler of Sudhanoti Sardar Shams Khan Abakhel Sadozai:

Sardar Abdullah Jan Abakhel Sadozai came from Swabi Hunda to Sudhanoti in 1560 with his four young sons as part of a military expedition of Nawab Sudhanoti. Among these sons Sardar Shams Khan is the descendant of Sardar Dhamu Khan Abakhel and his lineage is detailed below:

1. Sardar Dhamu Khan Abakhel Sadozai came with his father from their homeland of Swabi Hunda to Sudhanoti. His son was:

2. Sardar Gaju Khan Abakhel Sadozai, born in 1563. His son was:

3. The Baba-e-dirup Badshah, whose son was:

4. Sardar Miral Khan Abakhel Sadozai, and his only son was:

5. Sardar Hafiz Waja Khan Abakhel Sadozai, the author of Dirop Nama. His son was:

6. Sardar Abdullah Khan Abakhel Sadozai, and his son was:

7. Sardar Kalu Khan Abakhel Sadozai, and his son was:

8. Sardar Haider Khan Abakhel Sadozai, and his son was:

9. Sardar Ishaq Khan Abakhel Sadozai, and his son was:

10. Sardar Shams Khan Abakhel Sadozai, the famous ruler of Sudhanoti from 1810 to 1832.

Sardar Shams Khan Abakhel Sadozai had two sons:

Sardar Abdul Rahim Abakhel Sadozai and Sardar Abdul Rahman Abakhel Sadozai, who, along with their mother, were martyred in the Battle of Mang when they were hit by mountain cannon fire.

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Sardar Shams Khan Abakhel Sadozai, the famous ruler of Sudhnoti from 1810 to 1832 AD.

SARDAR SHAMS KHAN'S DECISION TO CONSTRUCT NEW RESIDENCES FOR THE FORMER RULERS OF SUDHNOTI - THE DESCENDANTS OF BAHADUR KHAN

CHAPTER 20

Sardar Bahadur Khan Sadozai was the eldest son of Sardar Alam Khan Sadozai, who defeated Nawab Sudhnoti Sardar Rajab Saeed in the Battle of Puland and seized control of the central Sudhnoti capital, Fort Bawar, in 1626. In this battle, Nawab Rajab Saeed, along with his five brothers and eight hundred soldiers, was killed. Following this, the defeated army of Rajab Saeed fled to Fort Brahan, where they had a military camp at that time. After the deaths of Rajab Saeed and his brothers, Sardar

Mukarram Khan, the nephew of Rajab Saeed, was appointed as the new ruler of Sudhnoti. On the other hand, Sardar Alam Khan Sadozai became the new ruler of central Sudhnoti.

Four battles ensued between these two rulers of Sudhnoti, but none ended decisively. Consequently, Sardar Alam Khan Sadozai vowed to his army to fight a decisive battle in which he took an oath to eliminate Sardar Mukarram Khan and all the Abdal Sadozais. Following this, Sardar Alam Khan Sadozai laid siege to both Fort aain and Fort Brahan. As the siege prolonged, Sardar Mukarram Khan, fearful of Sardar Alam Khan Sadozai's intentions, offered his government to his spiritual leader, Baba Dirop Badshah, as a bestowment (nazrana) to seek his protection. Seeing this, Sardar Alam Khan Sadozai, who was also a devoted follower of Baba Dirop Badshah, offered his government to Baba Dirop Badshah as well.

Baba Rahat Dirop Badshah then during his rule in Sudhnoti, presented the **"Sudhnoti**

Constitution" in the Loya Jirga, which was joyfully accepted by all the Pakhtuns of Sudhnoti. Under this constitution, Sudhnoti was divided into fifteen units, each governed by one of the fifteen mountain chiefs of Sudhnoti. The largest area of Sudhnoti was selected as the central Sudhnoti region, which included the three renowned forts that served as the capital.

The remaining fifteen units of Sudhnoti were made to pay regular taxes under the authority of central Sudhnoti. Baba Dirop Badshah ruled central Sudhnoti from 1626 to 1650, and afterward, when he found the fifteen units of Sudhnoti to be completely loyal to central Sudhnoti, he buried his sword and shield, renounced worldly affairs once more, and entrusted the government of central Sudhnoti to Sardar Bahadur Khan, the eldest son of Sardar Alam Khan Sadozai.

Sardar Bahadur Khan and his descendants ruled Sudhnoti continuously from 1650 until 1810, when their reign ended due to the civil

war triggered by the immoral behavior of Nawab Sudhnoti Sardar Rais Khan. In this conflict, Sardar Rais Khan, along with his nineteen sons and 150 members of Sardar Bahadur Khan's family, was killed.

The surviving men and women of Sardar Bahadur Khan's family requested Sardar Shams Khan to allow them to continue residing in Fort Brahan. However, while Sardar Shams Khan did not permit them to stay in Fort Brahan, he showed respect for the former ruling family of Sudhnoti by constructing twenty grand, fortress-like houses at the edge of the dense Neyarian forests for the twenty surviving men of Sardar Bahadur Khan's family. He then settled them in these houses.

This area later became known as "Qalaan" due to these fortress-like houses, and it remains famous by that name to this day. Previously, this area was simply called the Neyarian Forest and had no other name. Today, all the Abakhel Sadozais residing in Qalaan are descendants of those great rulers

of Sudhnoti who defeated the Abdal Sadozais in the Battle of Puland and ruled the Pakhtun state of Sudhnoti from 1650 to 1810.

For this reason, the renowned British historian J.M. Wikeley also mentioned in his book "Punjabi Musalmans"(Muslims) that the ruling family of Sudhnoti is settled in Qalaan. However, J.M. Wikeley did not mention the descendants of Nawab Jassi Khan Abdal Sadozai, who ruled Sudhnoti from 1407 to 1626 for 219 years. The Rais family, the descendants of Sardar Rais Khan, are currently settled between Holar and Thorar.

Similarly, the Rais families of Sudhnoti include the descendants of Baba Rahat Dirop Badshah, who ruled Sudhnoti from 1626 to 1650 and again from 1810 to 5 April 1832. They ruled Sudhnoti for a total of 63 years, from 1844 to March 3, 1859. Today, this family resides in the famous village of Dhaman in the Baloch Tehsil of Sudhnoti.

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The Historical Background of the First Sikh-Sudhnoti War at Plangi

CHAPTER 21

At the time of the First Sikh-Sudhnoti War, the state of Sudhnoti was divided among fifteen mountain chieftains, all of whom were under the command of Sardar Shams Khan, the ruler of central Sudhnoti. Due to this geographical division, many historians have referred to Sudhnoti as the "land of the mountain chieftains." The First Sikh-Sudhnoti War at Plangi was fought in the border areas of lower and upper Poonch, which lay to the northeast and southeast of this mountainous region.

The origins of this war trace back to Maharaja Ranjit Singh's invasion of Kashmir. In mid-June 1814, when Ranjit Singh's forces reached Rajouri via Bhimber on their way to capture Kashmir, the ruler of Rajouri, Raja Agar Khan, surrendered without resistance.

Once in Rajouri, Ranjit Singh divided his army into two parts. He assigned command of one part to Ram Dayal, Dal Singh, and Namdar Thakur, instructing them to capture the areas from Rajouri to Baramulla and from Baramulla to Shopian. Ranjit Singh himself led the other part of the army, aiming to conquer Poonch city, the adjacent upper areas, and the territories of the mountain chieftains of Sudhnoti. He planned to reunite his forces in Shopian, where the military camp of Muhammad Azim Khan was located, after subjugating these regions.

At that time, the state of Poonch was divided among three rulers. Raja Sherbaz Khan of the Rathore clan ruled one part, Raja Ruhullah controlled the central Poonch fort, and a few

independent tribes had gained autonomy over a small area of 300 square miles. To the west of Poonch lay the mountainous state of Sudhnoti, where fifteen mountain chieftains were under the command of Sardar Shams Khan, the ruler of Sudhnoti. When Ranjit Singh attacked Poonch with the intention of conquering all these areas, Raja Sherbaz Khan, without offering any resistance, peacefully annexed his territory to Ranjit Singh's empire.

Following this, Ranjit Singh laid siege to the central Poonch fort, which was under the control of Raja Ruhullah. However, during the siege, heavy rains began, rendering many of Ranjit Singh's cannons and guns unusable. Meanwhile, Raja Ruhullah's forces launched intense bombardment from the fort, forcing Ranjit Singh to retreat from central Poonch temporarily.

As Ranjit Singh's forces withdrew and reached the Plangi area on the Sudhnoti border, they encountered the mountain chieftains of Sudhnoti, led by Sardar Shams Khan himself. A

fierce battle ensued between the forces of Sudhnoti and Ranjit Singh. Due to the earlier rains, many of Ranjit Singh's cannons and guns were already damaged, and they could not withstand the sudden and powerful assault by the mountain chieftains of Sudhnoti. According to Sardar Suba Khan, the author of Maakhaz-e- Sudhnoti, the First Sikh-Sudhnoti War at Plangi lasted only four hours.

In this brief battle, the mountain chieftains of Sudhnoti killed eight hundred of Ranjit Singh's soldiers and three hundred mules. The relentless attack by the mountain chieftains left Ranjit Singh's already exhausted army no time to regroup, and within four hours, Ranjit Singh's morale collapsed.

Ultimately, Ranjit Singh was forced to flee towards Rajouri, abandoning two of his mountain cannons and twenty-two sacks of grain on the battlefield at Plangi. After collecting the spoils of war, the mountain chieftains, under the command of Sardar Shams Khan, returned to the borders of

Sudhnoti and awaited another attack from Ranjit Singh for twenty days. However, due to the significant loss of life and resources in this battle at the borders of central Poonch and Sudhnoti, Ranjit Singh refrained from even looking towards Kashmir for the next four and a half years, from mid-1814 to 1819.

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THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE SIKH-SUDHNOTI PEACE TREATY AFTER THE FIRST SIKH-SUDHNOTI WAR

CHAPTER 22

Following the First Sikh-Sudhnoti War at Plangi in mid-1814, Ranjit Singh spent the next four and a half years gathering his full strength. In 1819, he eventually conquered Kashmir in the Battle of Shopian. After securing Kashmir, Ranjit Singh turned his attention towards Poonch, where Raja Sherbaz Khan was still the ruler. As he had done in mid-1814, Raja Sherbaz Khan once again declared his allegiance to the Sikh Empire without offering any resistance, and he had also taken control of central Poonch

following the death of Raja Ruhullah.

This time, Ranjit Singh annexed Poonch without any battle. Afterward, instead of launching any attacks on the mountain chieftains of Sudhnoti or the independent tribes that had gained freedom from the 300-square-mile state of Poonch, Ranjit Singh focused on consolidating his control over Jammu, Kashmir, and Poonch. Consequently, the Sikh Empire swiftly established its complete dominance over Kashmir, Jammu, and Poonch.

Following this, the Sikh Empire granted a jagir (land grant) in Jammu to Gulab Singh's father which after his death, passed on to Gulab Singh. Shortly thereafter, Ranjit Singh also granted the Poonch jagir to Raja Dhian Singh, who was the Prime Minister of the Sikh Empire and Gulab Singh's brother. According to Maakhaz-s-Sudhnoti by Sardar Suba Khan, during the coronation ceremony of the Poonch jagir held at the Sikh Empire's court in Lahore, Prime Minister Dhian Singh pleaded with Maharaja Ranjit Singh, saying:

"Maharaja, I am ready to sacrifice my parents for you. If you command, the remaining areas of the 1600-square-mile Poonch region, which Emperor Akbar had officially granted to Raja Sirajuddin with his signature and seal in 1596, and which later fell under Afghan control but is now under the control of Maharaja Bahadur Ranjit Singh, could also be brought under the control of this great Sikh Empire."

Sardar Suba Khan notes that Dhian Singh made this statement during the coronation of the Poonch jagir because, prior to this, Ranjit Singh had granted Gulab Singh the jagir of Jammu without any official documentation, only through a public declaration. However, Dhian Singh needed official documents from the Sikh Empire for these jagirs. Since only 300 square miles of the 1600-square-mile Poonch region were under the control of independent tribes, and the remaining 1300 square miles were already under the control of the Sikh Empire, Dhian Singh had no concern about the 300-square-mile area of Poonch. Instead,

he strategically made this statement at the right time to achieve his objectives, and his request hit the mark.

During the same ceremony, Ranjit Singh announced that the remaining areas of Poonch would also be conquered, and the necessary documents for the related jagir would be secured. Consequently, Ranjit Singh signed and sealed the documents for the Poonch and Jastrota jagirs and granted them to Raja Dhian Singh.

This Poonch jagir, which the Mughals had officially demarcated as a 1600-square-mile region and granted to their newly converted Muslim soldier Raja Sirajuddin in 1596, had remained under Afghan control from 1752 to 1819. The Afghans also kept it under the same family's administration. After the Sikh Empire established its control over the region in 1819, it formally granted the 1600-square-mile Poonch jagir to Prime Minister Raja Dhian Singh in 1827.

This 1600-square-mile jagir of Poonch

included areas that are now part of both Azad Kashmir and the Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir, specifically:

- Tehsil Haveli

- Tehsil Mandi

- Tehsil Mendhar

- Tehsil Surankot

- Tehsil Mankot

These areas, which currently constitute the Poonch district of Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir, cover a total area of 1,674 square kilometers (646 square miles). This 646-square-mile region is part of the former 1600-square-mile Poonch state, now known as the Poonch district of Indian-administered Jammu & Kashmir.

In 1972, based on administrative divisions, the government of Indian-administered Jammu & Kashmir incorporated certain areas of the former 1600-square-mile Poonch state into Rajouri district. These included the 100-square-mile border regions of Mendhar, Surankot, and Balakot, which were previously

part of Poonch. As a result, out of 1600 square miles, 746 square miles of the former Poonch state are now part of Indian-administered Jammu & Kashmir.

In Pakistan-administered Azad Kashmir, several areas also belong to the former Poonch state including:

-District Bagh: Out of the total area of 770 square kilometers (300 square miles), 275 square miles were part of the former Poonch state.

-District Poonch: Out of the total area of 855 square kilometers (330 square miles), the 126-square-mile region of Tehsil Abbaspur was part of the former Poonch state.

-District Haveli: The entire area of 231 square miles is also part of the former Poonch state.

-District Kotli: Out of the total area of 1,862 square kilometers (719 square miles), 102 square miles, including Tehsil Nakiyal and Fatehpur Thakiala, were part of the former Poonch state.

-District Hattian: Out of the total area of 854 square kilometers (330 square miles), 120 square miles, including Tehsil Chikar Gari Dupatta, was part of the former Poonch state. Thus, the former Poonch state, established with these boundaries in 1596 and later granted as a jagir to Prime Minister Raja Dhian Singh by the Sikh Empire in 1827, still encompasses 854 square miles of what is now part of Azad Kashmir, including District Kotli, District Bagh, District Poonch, District Haveli, and District Hattian. These areas have been part of the 1600-square-mile Poonch state since 1596.

On 10th January 1827, Ranjit Singh formally granted the 1600-square-mile Poonch jagir to Dhian Singh. During the coronation of this jagir, Dhian Singh requested Ranjit Singh's permission to subdue the independent tribes occupying the remaining 300 square miles of the Poonch state and the 550-square-mile area of Sudhnoti ruled by the mountain chieftains. This led to the decision to bring these areas under the control of the Sikh Empire, which

ultimately resulted in the Sikh-Sudhnoti Peace Treaty.

Sardar Suba Khan, the author of Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti, writes that after 10th January 1827, Ranjit Singh personally led an army of 60,000 troops and camped at Rawalpindi-Kahuta, known as the gateway to Sudhnoti on 24th February 1827. Here, Ranjit Singh assessed the strength of the mountain chieftains of Sudhnoti, as he had previously been defeated by them at the Sudhnoti border in mid-1814. This time, employing a more strategic approach, he halted at Kahuta and launched a heavy bombardment with 150 cannons on the areas under Sudhnoti's control. The sheer size of the army and its artillery and modern weaponry instilled fear and panic among the mountain chieftains and the other independent tribes of Poonch.

According to Sardar Suba Khan, the author of "Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti, following the over-whelming display of force by Ranjit Singh at Kahuta, the tribes of Poonch that had earlier rebelled against the Poonch State

and established their own independent rule over a 300-square-mile area came forward on 25th February 1827 and declared their allegiance to Ranjit Singh. In response, Ranjit Singh reincorporated this 300-square-mile territory back into the State of Poonch, keeping it within Dhian Singh's jagir.

At that time, the remaining 550 square miles of the Sudhnoti region were still outside the control of the Sikh Empire. This area was governed by fifteen small independent mountain chieftains of the Sadozai Sudhan tribe, led by Sardar Shams Khan. Upon learning of Ranjit Singh's encampment at Kahuta, Sardar Shams Khan convened a Loya jirga of these chieftains at Qila Mang to discuss whether to engage in battle or submit to the Sikh Empire. They realized that the total military strength of the Sudhnoti chieftains was only around 4,500 soldiers, with the remainder being peasant fighters who lacked even their own ride.

Given the circumstances, the chieftains

decided that if a peace agreement could be reached with the Sikh Empire, it would be acceptable; otherwise, they would rely on divine intervention and fight in the name of God, regardless of the outcome. Following this unanimous decision, Sardar Shams Khan sent his envoy to Ranjit Singh's Muslim diplomat and Foreign Minister, Faqir Azizuddin, offering to bring Sudhnoti under the control of the Sikh Empire through a peace agreement.

It is important to note that in ancient times, peace agreements were a recognized legal practice in the Indian subcontinent. Whenever a state accepted the authority of an empire without engaging in battle, it was required to pay lower taxes compared to states conquered through force, and the local rulers were allowed to retain their positions of power.

When Faqir Azizuddin presented the Sudhnoti chieftains' request for a peace agreement to Ranjit Singh, he gladly accepted it. The peace treaty between the Sudhnoti

chieftains and Ranjit Singh was subsequently formalized at the location known as Holar, which is also referred to as Bab-e-Sudhnoti in present-day Azad Kashmir. The main article of the treaty stated:

1. Leadership and Representation: Sardar Shams Khan would retain his position as the head of the fifteen mountain chieftains of Sudhnoti and be given official representation in the Sikh Empire's Lahore court. Sardar Shams Khan, along with his entire family of seventy members, would reside in Lahore and manage the affairs of Sudhnoti from there, including the collection of taxes. He would only be allowed to visit Sudhnoti after earning the full trust of the Sikh Empire, but he could inform the Lahore court and travel there with his seventy family members whenever necessary.

As per this agreement, Sardar Shams Khan, along with his seventy family members, was required to relocate from Qila Mang to the Lahore court of the Sikh Empire. Following the agreement, Ranjit Singh appointed Faqir

Azizuddin as the head of a delegation, which included Dhian Singh, Sardar Shams Khan, the fifteen Sudhnoti chieftains, and ten other ministers and advisors of the Sikh Empire. The delegation was tasked with determining a tax amount for Sudhnoti based on population. According to Sardar Suba Khan, the delegation set an annual tax of 10,600 rupees, which Sardar Shams Khan was to collect from the fifteen entities of Sudhnoti.

The internal autonomy of Sudhnoti was preserved under the agreement, including control over the forts, judiciary, policing, and the collection of taxes. After these arrangements were finalized with Sardar Shams Khan, the Sikh Empire instructed him to deliver the collected taxes from Sudhnoti to the Prime Minister of the Sikh Empire, Raja Dhian Singh, in Lahore. Sardar Shams Khan diligently fulfilled his duties under the peace agreement from 28th February 1827 to 5th April 1832.

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE INTEGRATION OF SUDHNOTI INTO THE POONCH JAGIR

CHAPTER 23

In the context of the Sikh-Sudhnoti Peace Agreement, it is stated that on 28th February 1827, the State of Sudhnoti accepted the authority of the Sikh Empire through a peace treaty. Under this treaty, Sardar Shams Khan was required to pay an annual tax of 10,600 rupees from Sudhnoti to the Sikh Empire. Sardar Shams Khan diligently fulfilled his responsibilities in the Sikh Empire's Lahore court from 28 February 1827 to 5 April 1832. His honesty and high character impressed the Sikh Empire's Prime

Minister, Raja Dhian Singh. Meanwhile, the mountain chieftains of Sudhnoti were also pleased with Sardar Shams Khan's leadership.

However, during the thirteen years from 1819 to 1832, significant changes took place within the Sikh Empire. The Dogra brothers, Gulab Singh and Mian Dhian Singh, gained considerable power during this period, enabling them to manipulate the Sikh court for their own interests. The Dogra brothers devised a plan to incorporate the State of Sudhnoti, which had been under direct control of the Sikh Empire since 1827, into their jagirs by first eliminating Sardar Shams Khan. They began by feeding Maharaja Ranjit Singh false reports of rebellion in Sudhnoti, attribut-ing the unrest to Sardar Shams Khan's incom-petence. Without informing Sardar Shams Khan, they began constructing military posts in Sudhnoti in early March 1832, which was a direct violation of Sudhnoti's internal autonomy and when Gulab Singh and Dhian Singh, started building military posts in

Sudhnoti, the mountain chieftains of Sudhnoti halted the construction. This led to a skirmish between the Sudhozai chieftains of Sudhnoti and the Sikh army, resulting in the death of twenty Sikh soldiers, while the remaining Sikh forces retreated towards Poonch.

After the incident, messengers from the mountain chieftains of Sudhnoti traveled to Lahore to inform Sardar Shams Khan about the construction of the military posts and the ensuing conflict. Sardar Shams Khan sent a message back to the chieftains, instructing them not to take any further action without consulting him, assuring them that he would address the issue at the Lahore court. He expressed confidence that no military posts would be built in Sudhnoti and emphasized the importance of not taking any action without his approval. The messengers returned to Sudhnoti with this message.

Meanwhile, the Dogra brothers had already informed Ranjit Singh of a rebellion in Sudhnoti. Ranjit Singh summoned Sardar

Shams Khan to inquire about the incident. Sardar Shams Khan explained the situation, stating that the Dogra brothers had started constructing military posts in Sudhnoti without informing the local chieftains, leading to a confrontation. He clarified that there was no rebellion, but rather a misunderstanding due to the unauthorized construction of the posts. Ranjit Singh, somewhat angered, asked, "So, if we build military posts in Sudhnoti, will the chieftains now attack us?" Sardar Shams Khan firmly replied that such actions would be in direct violation of the peace treaty, which guaranteed Sudhnoti's internal autonomy.

Ranjit Singh then summoned the Dogra brothers to explain the situation. The Dogra brothers, adding more falsehoods, claimed that soldiers stationed at the border between Poonch and Sudhnoti had wandered into Sudhnoti while hunting and were attacked by the chieftains, resulting in the death of twenty soldiers. They argued that the internal autonomy of Sudhnoti was emboldening other

states and that the people of Sudhnoti had become increasingly rebellious. They suggested limiting Sardar Shams Khan's powers, a proposal that Ranjit Singh found agreeable.

According to Sardar Suba Khan, the author of “Maakhaz Sudhnoti”, Ranjit Singh subsequently ordered the Dogra brothers to limit Sudhnoti's internal autonomy and construct military posts there. On 5th April 1832, the Dogra brothers, along with more than thirty thousand Sikh soldiers, advanced towards Sudhnoti. In their presence, police stations and military posts were established in all the towns and villages of Sudhnoti. The mountain chieftains of Sudhnoti promptly informed Sardar Shams Khan of these developments, who then advised them to remain silent and not take any action. Although the chieftains complied with Sardar Shams Khan's orders, it was beyond their tolerance, as there had been no Sikh or Dogra military posts in Sudhnoti before 5th April 1832.

Under the peace treaty, Sudhnoti enjoyed

complete internal autonomy, with its only obligation to the Sikh Empire being the payment of taxes based on population. However, after 5th April 1832, when Sudhnoti's internal autonomy was revoked and it was incorporated into Poonch, the construction of Sikh military posts and police stations began, similar to those in other parts of the Sikh Empire.

Seeing the situation, a delegation of mountain chieftains from Sudhnoti once again traveled to Lahore to meet Sardar Shams Khan. He advised them to remain patient, strong, and united, assuring them that he would do everything possible to preserve Sudhnoti's internal autonomy. He also promised that if he failed, he would soon leave Lahore with his family and join them in Sudhnoti, but instructed them not to take any action before his return. However despite Sardar Shams Khan's best efforts, he ultimately not only faced failure in his attempts to maintain Sudhnoti's autonomy from all sides, but he was also told by the Prime Minister of

the Sikh Empire, Raja Dhian Singh, that Sudhnoti had now been merged into Poonch under the orders of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, and that Poonch and Sudhnoti had been made a single unit. Therefore, the tax collector (Malia Dar) of Poonch, Diwan Dilbagh Rai, would now also collect taxes from Sudhnoti, as Sudhnoti was now part of Poonch, and since Diwan Dilbagh Rai was the Malia Dar (tax collector) of Poonch, he would now be responsible for tax collection in Sudhnoti as well. Thus, you should now work in cooperation with him. Following this, Sardar Shams Khan, along with his family, made the firm decision to rebel against the Lahore Durbar and flee from it, which will be discussed further in the context of the second Sikh-Sudhnoti war. Here, a brief historical background is provided regarding the merger of the Pakhtun state of Sudhnoti, established in 1407, into the jagir of Poonch, established in 1596, on the 5th of April,1832.

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BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE SECOND SIKH-SUDHNOTI WAR

CHAPTER 24

On 28th February 1827, the State of Sudhnoti accepted the sovereignty of the Sikh Empire through a peace agreement. This agreement maintained Sudhnoti's internal autonomy, the criminal justice system in the fort of Kot, the leadership of Sudhnoti's fifteen units, and the collection of taxes from Sudhnoti remained under the control of Sardar Shams Khan Abakhel Sadozai. Due to the subjugation by the Sikh Empire, Sardar Shams Khan had to pay an annual tax of 10,600 rupees to the Sikh court in Lahore.

Initially, Sardar Shams Khan, along with seventy members of his family, had to reside in the Sikh court in Lahore because, under the peace agreement, Sardar Shams Khan and his family were made guarantors for the annual tax from the fifteen units of Sudhnoti. However, after two years, when Sardar Shams gained the trust of the Sikh Empire, the rest of his sixty family members were allowed to return to their ancestral village of Dhaman in Sudhnoti. Subsequently, he continued to live in the Sikh court in Lahore with his immediate family and ten Sudhan guards along with four Sikh guards provided by the Sikh Empire.

On 5th April 1832, when the internal autonomy of Sudhnoti was abolished and the Sikh Empire annexed the state into the Poonch region, and Diwan Dalbagh Rai's influence began to grow, Sardar Shams Khan abruptly separated from the court and returned to his ancestral village of Dhaman in Sudhnoti. Upon his return, he convened a *Loya Jirga* in the Dipri Fort of Dhaman, where all the

chieftains of Sudhnoti took an oath to fight and resist the Sikh Empire. The decision was made to go to war against the Sikh Empire. When the Sikh army learned of this *Loya Jirga* in Dhaman, they launched an attack on the village via Kotli, marking the beginning of the Second Sikh-Sudhnoti War.

The battle spread from Sardar Shams Khan's ancestral village of Dhaman to the forts of Sudhnoti. Within days, Sardar Shams Khan's forces had liberated the entire Sudhnoti from Sikh control and advanced towards Poonch. During this time, the tribes of Poonch, which had rebelled against the central authority of Poonch in 1810 and established their small independent states over an area of 300 square miles but later submitted to the Sikh Empire out of fear in 1827, also rose in rebellion against the Sikhs. In response to Sardar Shams Khan's growing victories, the Sikh Empire dispatched three armies, each comprising 5,000 troops, under Generals Udham Singh, Labh Singh, and Zorawar Singh, to counter Sardar Shams Khan.

However, like the First Sikh-Sudhnoti War, the Sikh army faced consecutive defeats on twenty-two fronts across Sudhnoti, Poonch, and Jammu.

As a result of these defeats, Sudhnoti captured the entire Poonch estate and half of the Jammu estate. The author of “Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti”, Sardar Suba Khan, notes that 3,500 Sikh soldiers were killed in the Second Sikh-Sudhnoti War, with the heaviest casualties occurring in the Battle of Badi Galla, which was part of Sardar Shams Khan's ancestral land in Dhaman. Badi Galla was the area of the Sabz Ali Khan and Sardar Mlli Khan neighborhood and was Sardar Shams Khan's birthplace.

In the Battle of Badi Galla, the Sikh forces suffered the most significant losses, with approximately 1,500 Sikh soldiers killed. The battlefield was so bloody that the streams and ravines in the area ran red with blood for several days. Following this bloodshed, the area, previously known as Badi Galla, became known as Ratt Galla or Ratt Na Galla (Ratt

meaning blood in the local language). The name change occurred due to the intense bloodshed that took place there.

This text provides evidence of this that the author of Maakhaz-e-Sudhnuti, the last ruler of Sudhnuti, Sardar Suba Khan, continued writing Maakhaz-e-Sudhnuti until 1852 AD. Additionally, the Hindu author of “Gulab Nama” writes that Sardar Shams Khan, a notorious leader of the Sudhan tribe, not only massacred Sikh soldiers but also ordinary Sikhs and Hindus. Sardar Shams Khan, during the Second Sikh-Sudhnuti War, brutally killed many unborn Sikh and Hindu children by slitting the wombs of pregnant women, preventing these children from being born.

Furthermore, Sardar Suba Khan, an eyewitness of the Second Sikh-Sudhnuti War, writes in “Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti” that out of the 25 battlefronts in this war, Sudhnuti emerged victorious in 22 of them. During this war, Sardar Shams Khan seized 22 small and large forts and 106 outposts from the Sikh Empire's

army within two months. In addition to this, around 3,500 Sikh soldiers and 5,000 of their mules were killed, while on the other side, 1,200 Sadozai Sudhan soldiers and 400 mules were also killed. In summary, like the First Sikh-Sudhnuti War, Sudhnuti emerged victorious in the Second Sikh-Sudhnuti War as well.

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A BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE FALL OF SUDHNUTI IN THE THIRD SIKH-SUDHNOTI WAR

CHAPTER 25

On the 5th of April, 1832, when the Sikh Empire attempted to annex the State of Sudhnoti into the Poonch estate, the ruler of Sudhnoti, Sardar Shams Khan Abakhel Sadozai, rebelled against the Sikh Empire. This rebellion led to the Second Sikh-Sudhnoti War. After Sudhnoti's victory in this war, it gained control over most of the regions up to Jammu, including the Poonch estate. The author of “Maakhaz Sudhnoti, Sardar Suba Khan, writes that during the Third Sikh-Sudhnoti War, the State of Sudhnoti had

taken control of 15 of its forts and 7 additional forts in Poonch and Jammu. Thus, Sudhnoti now had a total of 22 forts, for which Sardar Shams Khan increased his army from 7,000 to 16,000 soldiers and stationed them as needed in these forts.

After that Sardar Shams Khan also got significant increase in the annual tax from Sidhnoti which was during the peace agreement, Rs. 10,600 per annum but now he collected Rs. 160,000 in taxes from the conquered regions of Poonch and Jammu in just two months and ten days. This was because Sardar Shams Khan urgently needed money and a larger army, which forced him to take such steps. However, this aggressive tax collection angered even his Muslim tribal supporters in Poonch and Jammu, who started looking for ways to rid themselves of Sardar Shams Khan.

The author of “Maakhaz-d-Sudhnoti” writes that due to this aggressive tax collection, Sardar Shams Khan had to fight wars on both

internal and external fronts. On the other hand, seeing Sardar Shams Khan's growing victories, the Sikh Empire abandoned its military campaigns in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and other regions to wage a decisive war against him. This war was led by the bravest General of the Sikh Empire, Gulab Singh, who commanded an army of 60,000 soldiers with 50 generals under his command.

Instead of directly attacking Sudhnoti, General Gulab Singh first camped in Kahuta, known as the gateway to Sudhnoti, for two months. There, he began by aligning with the Muslim tribes who were angered by Sardar Shams Khan's heavy tax collection. These were the same tribes from Poonch and Jammu from whom Sardar Shams Khan had collected Rs. 160,000 in taxes within two months and ten days. By the end of the two months, Gulab Singh had successfully turned many Muslims in Poonch and Jammu against Sardar Shams Khan.

After this, the Sikh army crossed the Jhelum

River, attacked the Sudhnoti fort of Aain and then Mang, and launched a simultaneous attack on all four forts considered the capitals of Sudhnoti using 800 mountain cannons. Although the Sudhnoti army resisted for a month, 14,000 soldiers were killed in the battlefield. Consequently, Sardar Shams Khan had to flee from the Mang Fort, and along with 300 of his companions, took refuge in Sudran with Raja Sherbaz Khan, the former ruler of Poonch.

Raja Sherbaz Khan was the same ruler who, after twice surrendering without resistance, had been given the rule over a small estate of 104 villages by the Sikh Empire. When Sardar Shams Khan conquered most of Poonch and Jammu, he did not attack Sardar Sherbaz Khan's estate, considering it a Muslim estate. In return for this favor, Raja Sherbaz Khan secretly sheltered Sardar Shams Khan in his estate of Sudran and assured him of assistance in reassembling his scattered army to fight the Sikh Empire again. However, the Sikh Empire

did not give Sardar Shams Khan the time to recover for a third time. On the other hand, the Sikh army continued its attacks on Sudhnoti. During one such battle, Sardar Sabz Ali Khan's army came under heavy fire from mountain cannons, resulting in Sardar Sabz Ali Khan, Sardar Mili Khan, and 300 other Sadozai chiefs being severely wounded and left in a critical condition. When these prominent generals of Sudhnoti fell into the hands of the Sikh army, their skins were brutally flayed while they were still alive.

After the death of Sudhnotii's renowned generals, Sardar Sabz Ali Khan and Mili Khan, the morale of the Sikh army, led by General Gulab Singh, soared. Gulab Singh then announced that any soldier who brought the head of a Sudhan man, woman, elder, or child would be rewarded with five rupees per head. Following this announcement, the Sikh soldiers beheaded 3,000 Sudhan men and women.

During this time, the Sikh army also

discovered the hiding place of Sardar Shams Khan. General Gulab Singh sent a letter with a messenger to Raja Sherbaz Khan of Sudran, threatening that if Sardar Shams Khan was not handed over to them, Raja Sherbaz Khan should prepare to have his skin flayed like that of the generals Sardar Sabz Ali Khan and Sardar Mili Khan. Upon receiving this threatening letter, Raja Sherbaz Khan was gripped with fear. That very night, he had his troubled guest, Sardar Shams Khan, martyred in his sleep and sent his body to the Sikh General Gulab Singh, securing his own safety.

After the death of Sardar Shams Khan, the Sudhnoti resistance movement collapsed, leading to the fall of Sudhnoti. For a long time after, Sudhnoti remained under the control of the Sikh Empire. The author of "Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti", Sardar Suba Khan, who directly participated in the Third Sikh-Sudhnoti War and was a Dewan of Sudhnoti under the rule of Sardar Shams Khan, recounts this in his writings. Sardar Suba Khan whose father was

the cousin of Sardar Shams Khan's father, writes that in the Third Sikh-Sudhnoti War, 14,000 Sadozai Sudhan soldiers and 3,000 other Sadozai Sudhan farmers were martyred on the battlefield. Additionally, 1,000 women, children, and elders also attained martyrdom in this war. The Sikh army captured 5,000 Sadozai Sudhans, including 2,000 children and women. After this war, Sudhnoti completely fell under the control of the Sikh Empire.

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Sardar Sabz Ali Khan Abakhel Sadozai, the renovned general of Sudhnoti.

THE REGION OF SUDHNOTI, FROM 1832 TO 1844 AND ITS BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

CHAPTER 26

According to "Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti", authored by Sardar Suba Khan, the last ruler and former Diwan of Sudhnoti, during the third Sikh-Sudhnoti war in 1832, 17,000 Sadozai Sudhans were martyred in the battlefield. After this, the Sikh Empire briefly captured Sudhnoti. The reference provided by the eyewitness author, Sardar Suba Khan, is corroborated by the Punjab Government Gazette of 1818, which states that the Sadozai Sudhans in Sudhnoti numbered 40,000. This number was also noted by

Lieutenant Major G.C. Smith in his book "A History of the Reigning Family of Lahore". However, 14 years later, in the census of 1832, the population of Sadozai Sudhans in the same Sudhnoti had astonishingly decreased from 40,000 to 25,300, while the populations of other tribes in Poonch and Jammu and Kashmir increased.

The main reason for this decline was that when the Sikhs of Punjab attempted to capture Sudhnoti in 1832, the Sudhans, following their Pakhtun traditions, fought until the last breath. The history of the Sadozai Sudhans of Sudhnoti testifies that out of the 40,000 Sudozai population in Sudhnoti, 17,000 young Sudozai Sudhans were martyred on the battlefield.

This is why, according to the Punjab Government Gazette, out of the remaining 25,000 Sadozais in Sudhnoti after the third Sikh-Sudhnoti war, 7,000 were elderly Sadozais, and the rest were 17,000 children of the martyrs and Ghazis from the 1832 war.

These children were aged between 5 to 10 years at the time of the 1832 war, but by 1844, when these children had grown up to be between 19 to 24 years old, they re-established their rule under the leadership of Sardar Suba Khan. They not only re-established their government but also dealt a surprising defeat to the Dogras in the Battle of Baral in Sudhnoti on March 3, 1859. However, it cannot be denied that the period from 1832 to 1843 was the most difficult time for the Sadhozai Sudhans of Sudhnoti. Such a time had never before befallen Sudhnoti from 1407 to 1832. However, after the genocide in 1832, when Sudhnoti, which had remained independent and autonomous under its free-spirited Pakhtuns from 1407 to 1832, was annexed into the Poonch estate, two governments were imposed on Sudhnoti from 1832 to 1844, similar to Poonch. One was the Sikh Empire, and the other was the Dogra of Dhian Singh.

Previously, in 1827, the Sikh Empire had given Poonch as a fiefdom to the Dogras, who

collected taxes from the region, kept half for themselves, and sent the other half to the Sikh Empire. However, there was no local representation from Poonch among the Dogra rulers, so there was no one to question their actions. As a result, the Dogras collected taxes multiple times a year and did as they pleased. Similarly, after the fall of Sudhnoti in 1832, the Sikh Empire also annexed it into the Poonch estate, leading to two governments being established in Sudhnoti. Consequently, the Dogras began collecting taxes from Sudhnoti multiple times a year as well, and the situation in Sudhnoti became much worse than in Poonch.

This was because, compared to Poonch, the Sudhans of Sudhnoti had always been rivals of the Dogras and Sikhs, making the situation more severe here. Another reason was that all the young Sadozai Sudhans had been killed in Sudhnoti, leaving no one to resist the Sikhs and Dogras from 1832 to 1844. However, the 15,000 Sadozai children who survived the

1832 war reached adulthood by 1844 and, under the leadership of Sardar Suba Khan, delivered a final blow to the crumbling walls of the Sikh Empire, defeating them and re-establishing their independent government in Sudhnoti in November 1844.

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A BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF NEW GOVERNMENTS IN JAMMU & KASHMIR, POONCH AND SUDHNOTI FROM 1844 TO 1850

CHAPTER 27

Between 1844 and 1850, Jammu, Kashmir, Poonch, and Sudhnoti, which were under the Sikh Empire, gained independence from it. Among these newly independent states, Jammu and Kashmir was the largest, so its brief historical background will be discussed first. After that, Poonch, being smaller than Jammu and Kashmir, will be discussed. Finally, Sudhnoti, being the smallest of the three, will be discussed.

When examining the historical background of Jammu and Kashmir, it becomes evident

that after the British East India Company defeated the Sikh Empire in the First Anglo-Sikh War, Jammu and Kashmir were the first territories to come under British control. According to the author of "Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti," General Gulab Singh, the commander of the Sikh Empire's army, betrayed the Sikh Empire and sided with the British. Being a cunning and ambitious ruler, Gulab Singh saw the Sikh Empire's defeat as an opportunity for his own future and took every possible advantage.

During this time, under the Treaty of Amritsar, Gulab Singh purchased the territories of Jammu and Kashmir, located east of the Indus River and west of the Ravi River, from the British Government of India, thus becoming the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir on March 16, 1846. Consequently, a new state, Jammu and Kashmir, came into existence under his rule. Gulab Singh, who had learned the art of governance much earlier when he gained the rule of Jammu thanks to his elder

brother Raja Dhian Singh, quickly expanded his influence and control over many areas.

On the other hand, Gulab Singh's brother, Raja Dhian Singh, who was also the Prime Minister of the Sikh Empire, had passed away. After purchasing Jammu and Kashmir from the British, Gulab Singh began to claim the estates of Dhian Singh by creating discord between Dhian Singh's sons. According to the author of "Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti," Gulab Singh desired to acquire the regions of Chapal, Bhimber, Kotli, and Poonch at any cost.

Dhian Singh's sons, Jawahar Singh and Moti Singh, were brought up in luxury and were unaware of Gulab Singh's political maneuvers. These two orphans, who had lived like princes, were now suddenly deprived of the protection of their father and elder brother. Dhian Singh, who had restored his ancestral state, which the Sikhs had taken from them, made his elder brother Gulab Singh the ruler again and granted his younger brother, Mian Sochat Singh, a vast estate at just fourteen years of

age, and for whom Hindu, Sikh, and Muslim rulers of Punjab, along with prominent ministers and dignitaries, would come to greet and pay their respects with folded hands". After Dhian Singh's death, his elder brother Gulab Singh created internal discord, forcing Dhian Singh's sons to appeal to the British government to reclaim their father's and brother's estates.

Consequently, on May 29, 1848, Dhian Singh's sons, Jawahar Singh and Moti Singh, filed a lawsuit against their uncle Gulab Singh to reclaim their father's and brother's estates. The lawsuit was titled as follows:

- Plaintiffs: Mian Jawahar Singh and Mian Moti Singh, sons of Mian Dhian Singh

- Defendant: Maharaja Gulab Singh, son of Raja Kishore Singh

1. Claim for the estate of Raja Dhian Singh, father of the plaintiffs, covering the areas of Chabal, Bhimber, etc., with an estimated annual income of four lakh fifty thousand rupees.

2. Claim for the estate of Raja Hira Singh,

brother of the plaintiffs, covering the areas of Jasrota and Poonch, with an estimated annual income of five lakh rupees, and half the estate and property of Raja Sochat Singh, uncle of the plaintiffs, related to Jammu, with an estimated annual income of three lakh rupees.

This claim was presented before Sir Frederick Currie Barrent, the Agent to the Governor-General for the North and West, Resident of Lahore, and Chief Commissioner in the meeting about the areas between the Rivers Yamuna and Beas. During the hearing, Diwan Jawala Sahai of Jammu appeared as the representative of Maharaja Gulab Singh. Although the case was of significant importance, it was dismissed within just fifteen days on May 14, 1848. with the reasoning that Gulab Singh himself would decide the matter. The haste and manner in which the Resident Commissioner of Lahore issued this order, under the apparent policy of some reconciliation and pressure, is clear evidence of the heavy bribe given by Gulab Singh to Sir Frederick Currie Barrent.

When Dhian Singh's sons received this order from Sir Frederick Currie Barrent, they were deeply disappointed and eventually had to go to Jammu to meet Gulab Singh. Gulab Singh then gave Raja Jawahar Singh the area of Kotli and Raja Moti Singh the area of Poonch while keeping the largest part of the disputed estate, the extensive region from Chapal (Bhimber) to Rajouri, for himself. Thus, he dismissed Dhian Singh's sons from Jammu, despite the fact that Chapal Bhimber's estate belonged to their father, Raja Dhian Singh, and that Jammu, where Gulab Singh was making such harsh decisions regarding the future of Dhian Singh's sons, had originally been granted to Dhian Singh as a jagir (estate).

However, Dhian Singh, being a kind man, out of respect for his father, refused to accept the right to rule over Jammu during his father's lifetime and instead arranged for his father, Kishore Singh, to receive the jagir from Ranjit Singh. After Dhian Singh's father passed away in 1822, Ranjit Singh again offered the

Jammu jagir to Dhian Singh, but Dhian Singh preferred his elder brother Gulab Singh and arranged for Ranjit Singh to grant the jagir to Gulab Singh instead. Yet, this ungrateful Gulab Singh was now sitting in Jammu, making unjust and oppressive decisions against Dhian Singh's sons.

At that time, Gulab Singh did not have control over Poonch, Bhimber, or Sudhnoti, as he was occupied with defending Jammu against repeated Sikh Empire attacks and controlling and conquering Kashmir and other agricultural regions. However, Dhian Singh's orphaned nephews needed Gulab Singh's consent to enter and take possession of their father's estates. They had no choice but to accept Gulab Singh's forceful division because of his support from the British. Consequently, they reluctantly accepted Gulab Singh's terms and left Jammu with their small army.

When they reached the border of Poonch and Kotli, a disagreement arose between the brothers. These two foolish brothers then

returned to Jammu to present their case before Gulab Singh again. Despite Gulab Singh's attempts to resolve the matter, they could not reconcile. Eventually, Jawahar Singh once again took his case to the British government's court. Sir Frederick Currie Barrent then strictly instructed the Resident Commissioner of Lahore to send the matter back to Maharaja Gulab Singh for resolution.

After this, the unfortunate brothers' case was once again presented before Gulab Singh's court. This time, Gulab Singh made an astonishingly strange decision regarding the dispute between the two brothers. He awarded Poonch to Raja Moti Singh and decided to give his brother, Raja Jawahar Singh, whom he had previously granted Kotli, only 3.1% of the revenue from the Poonch estate. Thus, Gulab Singh kept Kotli for himself as well and sent copies of this decision to the British Government of India. Subsequently, Sir Frederick Currie Barrent's court declared Poonch, which had been under the Sikh

Empire, as a new British state in 1850. After this, Dhian Singh's son, Jawahar Singh, heart-broken by the distress caused by Gulab Singh, committed suicide by ingesting poison in Gujarat. It is also said that someone might have poisoned him. With his death, Moti Singh was left alone in this world as the ruler of Poonch.

Moti Singh's father, Dhian Singh, and his brother, Hira Singh, both served as Prime Ministers of the Sikh Empire, but they were both murdered in the Lahore Darbar. Jawahar Singh, his other brother, committed suicide by poison, leaving Moti Singh as the only surviving member of his family. He lived in constant fear of Gulab Singh and his descendants. In December 1850, Moti Singh came to Poonch from Jammu with his small army of two hundred men and focused on establishing his rule and authority over his new country, Poonch. Thus, like the estate of Jammu & Kashmir and Poonch came into being, under the Sikh Empire, Sudhnoti became the third and the first country to gain independence from the Sikh Empire.

The founder of Sudhnoti's independence from the Sikh Empire was Sardar Suba Khan Abakhel Sadozai. In addition to being a ruler, Sardar Suba Khan was also a teacher of Persian and the author of a book titled "Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti." In this book, he narrates the events and circumstances leading to the establishment of his rule over Sudhnoti. He writes that when Ranjit Singh passed away on June 27, 1839, the decline of the Sikh Empire began through the court intrigues of Raja Dhian Singh. As a result, Ranjit Singh's three successor sons were killed between June 27, 1839, and 1843, within a span of three and a half years, and no one in the Lahore Darbar dared to question Raja Dhian Singh. However, Raja Dhian Singh had been the Prime Minister of the Sikh Empire's Lahore Durbar since 1819. This was the reason that after Ranjit Singh's death, Dhian Singh became active in his efforts to seize control of the Sikh Empire. To achieve this, Dhian Singh began gathering his loyal troops, who had

been tested over many years, in the Lahore Darbar to take control of or capture the Sikh Empire. During this time, Dhian Singh's forces also withdrew from the three forts and posts in Sudhnoti.

When Dhian Singh's troops, stationed in Sudhnoti, suddenly departed for the Lahore Darbar, Sardar Suba Khan seized the opportunity to take control of the three forts in Sudhnoti. Sardar Suba Khan writes in "Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti" that at the beginning of 1843, Dhian Singh's forces suddenly disappeared from the three forts in Sudhnoti as if they had vanished into thin air. Seeing these circumstances, he inquired about the reasons for the sudden withdrawal of Dhian Singh's forces from Sudhnoti and was surprised to learn that Dhian Singh's forces had also almost entirely disappeared from his other estates in Poonch, Chapal, Bhimber, and the like. All these troops were now constantly gathered around Dhian Singh in the Lahore Darbar.

Sardar Suba Khan writes that in such circumstances, he toured the entire Sudhnoti and gathered all the young men of the region. Although there was a large number of young men in Sudhnoti at that time, there were very few mature adults. The primary reason for this was the massacre of 1832, eleven years earlier, in which eighty-five percent of the Sadozais of Sudhnoti were killed. Nevertheless, he organized a force of young men from across Sudhnoti, and together they broke into the four main forts of Sudhnoti. The large quantities of wheat, rice, ghee, and other goods they found in these forts were distributed among the young men.

Afterward, Sardar Suba Khan established regular espionage contacts with the Lahore Darbar, through which they received daily news from the Darbar. Surprisingly, these were often very good news. A few months later, they received word from a messenger that Dhian Singh had been brutally murdered two days earlier, and his son, Hira Singh, had

been appointed Prime Minister of the Sikh Empire. However, after waiting for a few months, they observed that God had kept Dhian Singh's son entangled in the conspiracies and intrigues that his father had nurtured in the Lahore Darbar to such an extent that Hira Singh never had the opportunity to pay attention to his estates. This brief respite allowed them to recover in Sudhnoti.

With God's help, they repaired the damage to Sudhnoti's forts, and soon after, they received the news of Hira Singh's death. Following this, they began hearing more good news that the British were now turning against the Sikh Empire. Around the same time, they also learned that the Sikh Empire had been defeated in the First Anglo-Sikh War due to Gulab Singh's treachery. As a reward for his loyalty, the British had sold Gulab Singh the regions of Jammu and Kashmir, located between the eastern side of the Indus River and the western side of the Ravi River, for seventy-five lakh rupees. As a result, Gulab Singh

had risen from being a Raja to becoming Maharaja Gulab Singh.

While this news was not particularly good for them, it was at least a relief that Sudhnoti, Poonch, Bhimber, and other areas were not included in these territories. They also received news that the Sikh Empire was repeatedly attacking Jammu in retaliation for Gulab Singh's betrayal, while Gulab Singh, with the help of the British army, was defending against the Sikh forces. It was by God's grace that the Sikhs kept Gulab Singh entangled in Jammu until 1848, and even after that, the British army's presence in Jammu until 1850 kept Gulab Singh preoccupied with various fronts in Jammu and Kashmir, far from Sudhnoti. Moreover, they were fortunate that when Gulab Singh divided the estate of Dhian Singh, the father of Moti Singh and Jawahar Singh, in 1849, and granted Poonch to Moti Singh following the fall of the Sikh Empire, Moti Singh took a considerable amount of time to arrive in Poonch from Jammu.

When Moti Singh finally arrived in Poonch with his two hundred guards, he realized that Sudhnoti, which his father, Dhian Singh, had annexed to his estate in Poonch in 1832, had been a free and independent state for six years. At that time, Moti Singh remained silent due to his fear of Gulab Singh, as a war between Poonch and Sudhnoti would have led to one of two outcomes: either Sudhnoti would conquer Poonch, or Gulab Singh would use the pretext of helping Poonch to seize control of both Poonch and Sudhnoti. Since Gulab Singh had the support of the British Government of India, along with resources and wealth, the result of such a war would never have favored Moti Singh. Therefore, Moti Singh refrained from interfering with Sudhnoti until Gulab Singh's death.

However, Moti Singh fully cooperated with the British Government of India during the 1857 Indian Rebellion, providing them with financial aid and sending armed troops, which earned him considerable favor with the

British. As a result, Moti Singh learned a great deal from both friends and foes. Despite this, the mutual discord and folly of the Dogras allowed Sardar Suba Khan to successfully establish an independent government in Sudhnoti. Thus, Sudhnoti became the first region to gain independence from the Sikh Empire in November 1844, followed by Jammu and Kashmir and later Poonch.

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THE FIRST SUDHNOTI-POONCH WAR: A BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

CHAPTER 28

Sardar Suba Khan Abakhel Sadozai was born in the village of Dhaman in the Baloch Tehsil of present-day Sudhnoti District, Azad Kashmir, in the eighth generation of the Dirop family's Miral branch, descended from Baba-e-Dirop Badshah, a prominent ancestor. His father, Sardar Ibrahim Khan, and Sardar Ahsan Khan Sadozai, the father of the well-known Sudhnoti ruler Sardar Shams Khan, were first cousins. Sardar Suba Khan served as the Diwan (Chief Administrator) of Sudhnoti under the rule of Sardar Shams

Khan. He fought in all three major battles between the Sudhans and the Sikhs under Sardar Shams Khan's leadership, making him the most experienced leader of Sudhnoti.

Sardar Suba Khan also authored a book in Persian titled Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti, which was translated into Urdu by Sardar Sherbaz Khan with the help of Master Raza Khan, a Persian teacher, in 1969. After the fall of Sudhnoti on 5th April, 1832, Sardar Suba Khan established an independent and sovereign Sudhnoti government in November 1844.

Fifteen years later, Raja Moti Singh, who had established the modern state of Poonch in 1850, decided to test his luck against Sardar Suba Khan by attacking Sudhnoti on March 3, 1859. Raja Moti Singh led a small force of 1,000 soldiers, including 500 cavalry and 500 infantries, to attack the capital of Sudhnoti, Fort Bawar (present-day Barl). However, the 70-year-old Sardar Suba Khan, rather than defending from Fort Bawar, confronted Raja Moti Singh's forces near Talyan and gave him a

terrible defeat.

Sardar Sherbaz Khan writes in Register Sudhnoti that the battle between Raja Moti Singh and Sardar Suba Khan lasted only two hours, during which cannons, guns, swords, and arrows were used. In this brief skirmish, 182 of Raja Moti Singh's cavalries and 50 infantries were killed, causing the Raja to flee in fear from Talyan. Sardar Suba Khan's forces pursued the retreating army and killed another ten cavalrymen and fifty infantry soldiers a short distance from Talyan.

It was believed that Raja Moti Singh's entire fleeing army would be annihilated before reaching Tararkhal or Hajira. However, while pursuing the Raja's army, Sardar Suba Khan's forces were abruptly halted when a bullet from one of Sardar Suba Khan's own men struck his horse. The horse, in intense pain, bolted uncontrollably through the mountain terrain. The 70-year-old Sardar Suba Khan, unable to maintain his balance, fell from his horse. His hands became entangled in the

reins, and before the horse could be stopped, Sardar Suba Khan succumbed to his injuries on the spot. Though Raja Moti Singh's defeated army managed to escape, the people of Sudhnoti were struck with immense grief over the loss of their great leader, despite their victory.

Sardar Suba Khan Abakhel Sadozai ruled Sudhnoti from November 1844 until March 3, 1859, when he died after falling from his horse while pursuing the defeated forces of Raja Moti Singh.

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Sardar Suba Khan, the last ruler of Sudhnoti from 1844 till 3rd March 1859 AD. He is also the author of the book "Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti".

A BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE THREE DIVISIONS OF SUDHNOTI AND ITS THREE SADOZAI RULERS AFTER SARDAR SUBA KHAN'S DEATH

CHAPTER 29

After the death of Sardar Suba Khan Abakhel Sadozai on March 3, 1859, his eldest son, Sardar Sarzameen Khan Abakhel Sadozai, became the new ruler of Sudhnoti. However, Sardar Sarzameen Khan lacked the abilities of his father, Sardar Suba Khan. Unlike his father, who was known for his calm and thoughtful decision-making, Sardar Sarzameen Khan was impulsive and outspoken, which made him unpopular among the people. Despite this, Sardar Sarzameen Khan, without consulting any jirga

(council), considered himself the rightful heir and immediately declared himself the ruler of Sudhnoti right after leading his father's funeral prayer. Although the people temporarily accepted him as the ruler, Sardar Sarzameen Khan's hasty and bold proclamation right after the funeral gave his rival, Raja of Poonch, insight into his psychological disposition.

Raja of Poonch soon identified a potential rival to Sardar Sarzameen Khan in Sardar Tareen Khan Abakhel Sadozai, a brave Sadozai from the lineage of Sardar Bahadur Khan. The Raja reminded Sardar Tareen Khan of his family's long rule over Sudhnoti and encouraged him to reclaim his rightful position. To further persuade him, the Raja provided Sardar Tareen Khan with substantial financial support and assured him of his full cooperation. Consequently, Sardar Tareen Khan quickly gathered a large army.

When Sardar Sarzameen Khan learned of this development, he convened a Loya Jirga (grand assembly) where he proposed attacking Sardar

Tareen Khan. However, the other Sudhnoti leaders preferred to resolve the matter through dialogue. Offended by their suggestion, Sardar Sarzameen Khan began to insult the other leaders, leading to the assembly ending on a sour note with all the leaders deeply dissatisfied. The result was that two days later, when Sardar Tareen Khan held his own Loya Jirga, many of Sudhnoti's leaders attended and sided with Sardar Tareen Khan, declaring Sardar Sarzameen Khan unfit to rule.

During this assembly, the leaders who had been insulted by Sardar Sarzameen Khan in the previous Jirga joined forces with Sardar Tareen Khan and resolved to teach Sardar Sarzameen Khan a lesson. Sardar Tareen Khan, with an army of 1,000 soldiers, then attacked Sardar Sarzameen Khan's territory. In response, Sardar Sarzameen Khan decided to leave Fort Bawar and confront Sardar Tareen Khan in battle. In this battle, Sardar Sarzameen Khan had only 300 soldiers. However, during the fight, 100 of his men switched sides and joined

Sardar Tareen. When 60 of Sardar Sarzameen Khan's soldiers were killed, he fled the battle-field and took refuge in Fort Bawar (Barl). When Sardar Tareen's forces besieged the fort, Sardar Sarzameen Khan was left with only 140 soldiers inside, who were mostly his close relatives. However, when Sardar Sarzameen Khan began yelling and cursing at them, his younger brother, Sardar Lamma Khan, became deeply frustrated with his brother's ignorance, arrogance, and defeat. Lamma Khan, who was already 8 feet 4 inches tall at the age of 18 and had been named Lamma (meaning "tall") by their father, Sardar Suba Khan, due to his extraordinary height, suddenly struck Sardar Sarzameen Khan on the head with his sword, severing his head from his body.

Everyone inside the fort was shocked at this event. Some sympathizers then went out to inform Sardar Tareen Khan of what had happened inside the fort and requested him to leave a path open for Sardar Suba Khan's remaining family to safely exit. In exchange,

they offered to surrender the fort to him. Sardar Tareen Khan accepted this proposal and allowed Sardar Lamma Khan to leave the fort with 140 individuals, including women, children, and their belongings, and return to their village, Dhaman. Sardar Lamma Khan, keeping his word, left the fort and moved with his family to their ancestral village, Fort Dipri, in Dhaman.

As a result, Sardar Tareen Khan gained control over many areas of Sudhnoti. However, two months after this victory, Raja of Poonch, based on their friendship and the financial aid he had previously provided, requested Sardar Tareen Khan to allow the use of Fort Bawar as a storage and transit point for grain and goods transported from Rawalpindi to Poonch. Sardar Tareen granted permission to the Raja of Poonch to use Fort Bawar as a storage facility for goods, grain, and supplies transported from Rawalpindi to Poonch. However, this permission came with the conditions that "the Raja of Poonch would not station his troops in

Fort Bawar and that the fort would only be used for storing goods to be transported onward to Poonch." Little did the young ruler Sardar Tareen know that by considering these conditions insignificant and allowing the Raja of Poonch to use Fort Bawar, he was laying the foundation for the future subjugation of his descendants. Commenting on this foolish decision, Sardar Sherbaz Khan wrote in Register Sudhnoti that the Raja of Poonch practically purchased the central Fort Bawar from Sardar Tareen for a mere few thousand rupees. After this, only two significant forts remained in Sudhnoti: Fort Brahan and Fort Aain where the commanders (Qiladar) appointed by the former ruler of Sudhnoti, Sardar Suba Khan, to oversee these forts had reluctantly accepted Sardar Sarzameen Khan's rule after his father's death.

As a result, during the conflict between Sardar Tareen Khan Sadozai and Sardar Sarzameen Khan Sadozai, the commander of Fort Aain, Sardar Aka Khan Sadozai, and Fort

Brahan, Sardar Yaqoob Khan Sadozai, remained neutral. However, after Sardar Tareen Khan captured Fort Bawar and declared his rule over central Sudhnoti, both commanders, Sardar Aka Khan and Sardar Yaqoob Khan, declared their autonomy in their respective regions. They began to expand their territories by attacking and seizing other agricultural lands in Sudhnoti. This led to a fierce rivalry between the two commanders.

In this situation, Sardar Tareen Khan also attacked other areas of Sudhnoti and engaged in continuous warfare with the two commanders, Sardar Yaqoob Khan and Sardar Aka Khan, for three years. Sardar Sherbaz Khsn writes that these three commanders waged a strange and brutal war, where they attacked each other's territories during the day, killing one another's men, and at night, they would set fire to each other's villages and steal livestock. This day-and-night warfare turned Sudhnoti into a blood-soaked battlefield,

leading to severe unrest, poverty, and unemployment in the region.

Sardar Sherbaz Khan further notes that the commander with the most modern weapons would gain the upper hand in these battles. To obtain these weapons, all three commanders sought financial aid from the Raja of Poonch, who exploited the situation to his advantage. He made similar agreements with Sardar Aka Khan of Fort Aain and Sardar Yaqoob Khan of Fort Brahan as he had with Sardar Tareen Khan. These agreements allowed the Raja of Poonch to use Fort Aain and Fort Brahan under the same conditions: "The Raja of Poonch would not station his troops in these forts but would be allowed to store goods and supplies brought from Rawalpindi and transport them to Poonch."

In this way, the Raja of Poonch manipulated the Sudhnoti leaders, Sardar Aka Khan, Sardar Yaqoob Khan, and Sardar Tareen Khan, by providing them with financial aid and pitting them against each other. He secured the use

of Fort Bawar, Fort Aain, and Fort Brahan to store and transport his goods. Sardar Sherbaz Khan writes in Register Sudhnoti that just three years after the martyrdom of Sardar Suba Khan, by 1862, the Raja of Poonch had effectively purchased all three forts of Sudhnoti without any significant battle, dividing Sudhnoti into three parts and placing them under three different rulers.

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Sardar Sarzameen Khan Abakhel Sadozai, the ruler of Sudhnoti.

BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE SADOZAI SARDAR'S LIBERATION FROM TRAITORS AND THE NEW JOURNEY TOWARDS PATRIOTISM AND SUBJUGATION IN SUDHNOTI

CHAPTER 30

In Sudhnoti, when all the Sadozai Sardars, Sardar Tareen Khan, Sardar Akka Khan, and Sardar Yaqoob Khan, witnessed firsthand the massacre of two thousand Sadozais as a result of their personal conflicts and the selling of Sudhnoti's forts to Raja Poonch, the one hundred and four villages of Sudhnoti simultaneously declared the three ruling Sardars as traitors and revolted against them. The rebellion first and most intensely began in Sardar Tareen's territories, as he controlled 70% of Sudhnoti. Fearing this widespread

insurrection, Sardar Tareen Khan had to form an alliance with Sardar Akka Khan and Sardar Yaqoob Khan to crush the local uprising. Together, the three Sardars brutally suppressed the rebellion.

According to Sardar Sherbaz Khan in the "Register Sudhnoti," three thousand Sadozais were killed within a month across the one hundred and four villages of Sudhnoti, effectively ending the rebellion. After quelling the uprising, Sardar Tareen Khan invited his allied rulers, Sardar Akka Khan of fort Aain and Sardar Yaqoob Khan of fort Barhan, to celebrate their victory at the central Sudhnoti Fort of Bawar (Baral). Sardar Akka Khan and Sardar Yaqoob Khan eagerly accepted the invitation, considering it an honor and a sign of their recognition by Sardar Tareen, who ruled over 70% of Sudhnoti. They believed that Sardar Tareen, by inviting them to crush the rebellion together, had acknowledged their authority over their respective territories and was now formally recognizing them as

rulers by inviting them in the victory celebration.

However, Sardar Tareen Khan had deceitful plans. During the celebration at Fort Bawar, he treacherously killed Sardar Akka Khan and Sardar Yaqoob Khan, along with their three hundred companions. Following this, Sardar Tareen quickly seized control of their forts and territories. His cunning, bravery, and quick thinking were consistent with the dignity of his family, which had ruled Sudhnoti for 160 years, producing capable rulers like Sardar Alam Khan, Sardar Bahadur Khan, and Sardar Sarbuland Khan.

Now, another member of this esteemed family, Sardar Tareen Khan, had once again become the ruler of Sudhnoti. Through his leadership, Sardar Tareen regained control of Sudhnoti after fifty years of his ancestors' rule by the mass killing of five and a half thousand Sadozais during his reign from October 1859 to April 1863, establishing complete control over Sudhnoti.

After witnessing these events, Raja Poonch

became fearful of Sardar Tareen Khan who from the lineage of Sardar Bahadur Khan once again established complete control over Sudhnoti after fifty years, so having intimidated by him, Raja Poonch secretly arranged to have Sardar Tareen Khan poisoned. According to Sardar Sherbaz Khan, on the night of Sardar Tareen's death, he consumed a small amount of ox meat curry, after which he suddenly started gasping for breath. His complexion turned yellow, and his face became swollen, while those who had prepared and served the meal disappeared from the scene. Thus, a brave ruler like Sardar Tareen died within moments.

Following Sardar Tareen's death, his young son, Sardar Wali Khan Abakhel Sadozai, ascended the throne of Sudhnoti on April 27, 1863, at the tender age of 17. However, the Sadozai Sardars, whose five and a half thousand men had been killed by Sardar Tareen and his battles, refused to accept Sardar Wali Khan's rule. Consequently, all the tribal factions in Sudhnoti rebelled. Due to his young

age and lack of capability, Sardar Wali Khan could not suppress the rebellion. As a result, in the ensuing chaos, each Sardar in Sudhnoti began to establish his own rule over two or three villages.

Observing this situation, Raja Poonch, under the guise of providing protection to Sardar Wali Khan, deployed his army on May 1st , 1863, in Sudhnoti's three forts and installed cannons. This marked the second fall of Sudhnoti, as the first had occurred on 5th April, 1832, during the Sudhnoti Disaster, though it had been reorganized under the leadership of Sardar Suba Khan in 1844. But now, with no Sardar like Sardar Tareen or Sardar Suba Khan to suppress the local rebellion, Sudhnoti was once again engulfed in flames, leading to the end of the rule of the three Sardars of Sudhnoti.

During this rebellion, Raja Poonch played a significant role by financially supporting the local Sadozai Sardars, encouraging them to declare themselves rulers of their respective

villages and regions. As a result, within a short span of time, by July 1863, a total of 60 Khans, with the financial backing of Raja Poonch, became rulers in Sudhnoti, each claiming dominion over small areas and villages.

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THE FATE OF THE 60 NEW KHAN SARDARS IN SUDHNOTI A BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

CHAPTER 31

After the death of Sardar Suba Khan on March 3, 1859, until July 1863, a period of four and a half years, numerous battles were fought among Sardar Sarzameen Khan, Sardar Tareen Khan, Sardar Akka Khan, Sardar Yaqoob Khan, and several other minor Sardars to gain control over Sudhnoti. These conflicts resulted in the deaths of five and a half thousand Sadozais and the burning of forty villages in Sudhnoti, reducing them to ashes and bloodshed. Despite this, no single Sardar was able to

establish a lasting rule over Sudhnoti.

According to Sardar Sherbaz Khan in the "Register Sudhnoti," after the death of Sardar Suba Khan, the sudden machinations of Sardar Tareen Khan incited the Sardars of Sudhnoti to the point where each one viewed seizing power in Sudhnoti as their primary life goal. Consequently, Sudhnoti was divided among sixty Khans, each ruling over territories consisting of just two or four villages. These Khans were constantly fearful of losing their power to each other. This state of uncertainty, lawlessness, poverty, and destitution forced all sixty new rulers to seek financial assistance from their neighboring Raja of Poonch. The Sardars of Sudhnoti had been fighting among themselves day and night for four and a half years, leading to the complete destruction of the region's economy. Therefore, to continue their wars, these Sardars had no choice but to rely on aid from Raja Poonch.

Raja Poonch, having quickly identified the weaknesses of these sixty new Sardars of

Sudhnoti, took advantage of the situation by offering special terms to certain influential Sardars, including Sardar Wali Khan (son of Sardar Tareen Khan), Sardar Mehtab Khan (son of Sardar Akka Khan), Sardar Iqbal Khan (son of Sardar Yaqoob Khan), and five other powerful Sadozai Sardars: Rai Kala Khan, Sardar Zahir Khan, Sardar Ashraf Khan, Sardar Fateh Khan, and Sardar Bosa Khan. Raja Poonch assured these eight Sardars that he would provide them with financial aid against their opponents whenever needed, inviting them to join the Poonch Bloc under very favorable conditions. Raja Poonch proposed that these Sardars remain fully independent and autonomous in their territories but, in return, they would pay five rupees out of every hundred rupees collected as tax to Raja Poonch. In exchange, Raja Poonch would cover all expenses needed for them to fight and seize territories from the other 52 Sardars of Sudhnoti.

At that time, the Sardars of Sudhnoti were in dire need of guns, weapons, and other

financial resources to expand their territories through warfare. Thus, Raja Poonch's offer seemed like a blessing to them. As a result, alongside the eight Sardars of Sudhnoti, twenty more Sardars also accepted this offer and joined the Poonch Bloc. With Raja Poonch's financial support, they began expanding their territories and seizing land from the other Sardars in Sudhnoti. In agreement, these twenty-eight Sardars also committed to paying Raja Poonch five rupees out of every hundred rupees collected as tax from their governed territories, thereby officially becoming part of the Poonch Bloc.

Sardar Sherbaz Khan writes in the Register Sudhnoti that after the 28 Sardars of Sudhnoti allied with Raja Poonch under the condition of receiving financial aid, purchasing new weapons, and reorganizing their forces to attack other territories within Sudhnoti, 17 other Sardars were compelled to join the Poonch Bloc under similar terms. These Sardars agreed to give 5% of the revenue from

their respective areas to Raja Poonch in exchange for his support. Consequently, another war erupted in Sudhnoti. However, the 15 proud and independent Sadozai Sardars, who refused to join the Poonch Bloc and rejected the condition of paying 5% of their revenue to Raja Poonch, were ultimately defeated by the 45 Sardars who had allied with Poonch. As a result, these 15 Sardars lost their power, wealth, and territories.

In December 1864, after these 45 Sardars of Sudhnoti joined the Poonch Bloc, Raja Poonch began sending his revenue collectors to their territories and further reinforced his military presence in the three forts of Sudhnoti. Sardar Sherbaz Khan writes that by December 1864, Raja Poonch had effectively taken control of Sudhnoti. The 45 Sardars, now known as "Khans ", in their respective areas, were referred to as "Ziladars" (district administrators) in the Dogra administration. Each Ziladar had several "Numberdars" (village heads) and "Chowkidars" (watchmen) under them, meaning

Sudhnoti was divided among 45 Ziladars at that time.

Each Ziladar was required to pay 5% of the revenue from their areas to Raja Poonch from 1864 to 1869, while keeping the remaining 95% for themselves. The number of Numberdars and Chowkidars a Ziladar had depended on the size of their territory. These Ziladars paid the Numberdars and Chowkidars in cash, grain, or other commodities from the revenue they collected. The Numberdars' duty was to collect taxes from the villagers in their jurisdiction and deliver them to a designated place, while the Chowkidars ensured the safe delivery of these taxes to the Ziladar. In 1870, Raja Poonch increased the tax from 5% to 25%. Later, after the execution of Sardar Abdul Mannan Khan, the grandson of the last ruler of Sudhnoti, Sardar Suba Khan, in 1894, Raja Poonch further increased the tax to 95%.

Following World War I, the Sadozai Sardars regained strength, and Baba-e-Sudhnoti Khan Muhammad Khan integrated Sudhnoti directly

into Jammu & Kashmir in 1932. He also obtained a seat in the Jammu & Kashmir Assembly, after which the Maharaja of Jammu & Kashmir set the tax rate at 90%. As a result, the Ziladars of Sudhnoti were allowed to keep 10% of the revenue from their areas while the remaining 90% was given to the Jammu & Kashmir government. This tax system remained in place until Sudhnoti was liberated on October 4, 1947.

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BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF RAJA POONCH MOTI SINGH'S VISIT TO SUDHNOTI AND AN UNPLEASANT INCIDENT

CHAPTER 32

When the 45 new Sadozai Sardars of Sudhnoti allied their territories with the Poonch Bloc, the relationship between Raja Poonch and the Sardars of Sudhnoti deepened. Eventually, the Sardars of Sudhnoti, fulfilling Raja Poonch's long-expressed desire to visit the forts of Sudhnoti, invited him to visit the region. With the end of the civil war in Sudhnoti between mid-1859 and late 1864, peace had returned, and the Sardars extended the invitation to Raja Poonch to visit Sudhnoti.

Raja Poonch arrived in Sudhnoti with great pomp and splendor on May 1st , 1866, at 1:00 PM via Kotli, reaching Palandri. Sardar Sherbaz Khan writes in the Register Sudhnoti that this was Raja Poonch's second visit to Sudhnoti since his defeat on March 3, 1859. This time, he was invited to attend the annual meeting of the Poonch Alliance Bloc at Palandri, where the event was organized in a large field with tents. Raja Poonch, adorned with a beautiful crown, arrived with his entourage of 500 cavalrymen and mule riders, receiving a grand welcome from the Sardars of Sudhnoti.

However, the event took an unexpected turn when Sardar Lamma Khan Abakhel Sadozai, the younger son of the former ruler of Sudhnoti, Sardar Suba Khan, suddenly approached the stage. During the meeting, he removed Raja Poonch's crown from his head, placed it on a nearby table, and whispered to Raja Poonch, "You are a guest of the Sardars of Sudhnoti, so I will only say this that during your visit to Sudhnoti, you must remove this

crown because if the descendants of Sardar Suba Khan are not allowed to wear a crown here, then no one else will be allowed to either. You are not permitted to wear a crown during your visit to Sudhnoti."

After witnessing Sardar Lamma Khan remove the crown from the head of Raja Poonch, there was a moment of confusion among everyone, as the Sardars of Sudhnoti and the protectors of Raja Poonch thought that just as the other Sardars of Sudhnoti had placed turbans on Raja Poonch's head, Sardar Lamma Khan also intended to do the same and join the Poonch Alliance with his forces. However, after removing the crown, Sardar Lamma Khan did no such thing. Instead, he stepped down from the stage and left with his troops.

A short while later, when Raja Poonch expressed his displeasure over the incident and expressed desire to return to Poonch, the other Sardars of Sudhnoti and Raja Poonch's guards became aware of what had transpired.

The Sardars assured Raja Poonch of his safety and explained that Sardar Lamma Khan was the younger son of the former ruler of Sudhnoti, Sardar Suba Khan, and the brother and murderer of the ruler of Sudhnoti, Sardar Sarzameen Khan. Despite not having joined the Poonch Bloc, the other Sardars of Sudhnoti had refrained from attacking his villages, Dhaman and Paghonar, out of respect for his noble lineage, which included figures like Baba-e-Dirop Badshah, Sardar Shams Khan, and Sardar Suba Khan.

The Sardars further explained that when Sardar Lamma Khan expressed a desire to meet Raja Poonch, they assumed he intended to join the Poonch Bloc, so they allowed him to meet Raja Poonch with his troops. However, after removing the crown and whispering something to Raja Poonch, Sardar Lamma Khan abruptly left with his troops, leaving everyone puzzled.

Despite the Sardars' reassurances, Raja Poonch was so shaken by Sardar Lamma

Khan's bold action that he could not bring himself to wear the crown again. Although he stayed in Sudhnoti for two more hours, he considered the crown an ill omen and never wore it during his brief visit. Thus, Raja Poonch cut short his planned five-day visit to just two hours and left Sudhnoti via Kotli without inspecting the forts, bidding farewell to the region.

Sardar Sherbaz Khan, the author of "Nuskha-e-Qadeem Register Sudhnoti", who translated "Dirop Nama" and "Maakhaz-e-Sudhnoti" from Persian into Urdu under the title "Register Sudhnoti", was the grandson of Sardar Lamma Khan, also known as "Sarha Taj," and the great-grandson of the ruler of Sudhnoti, Sardar Suba Khan.

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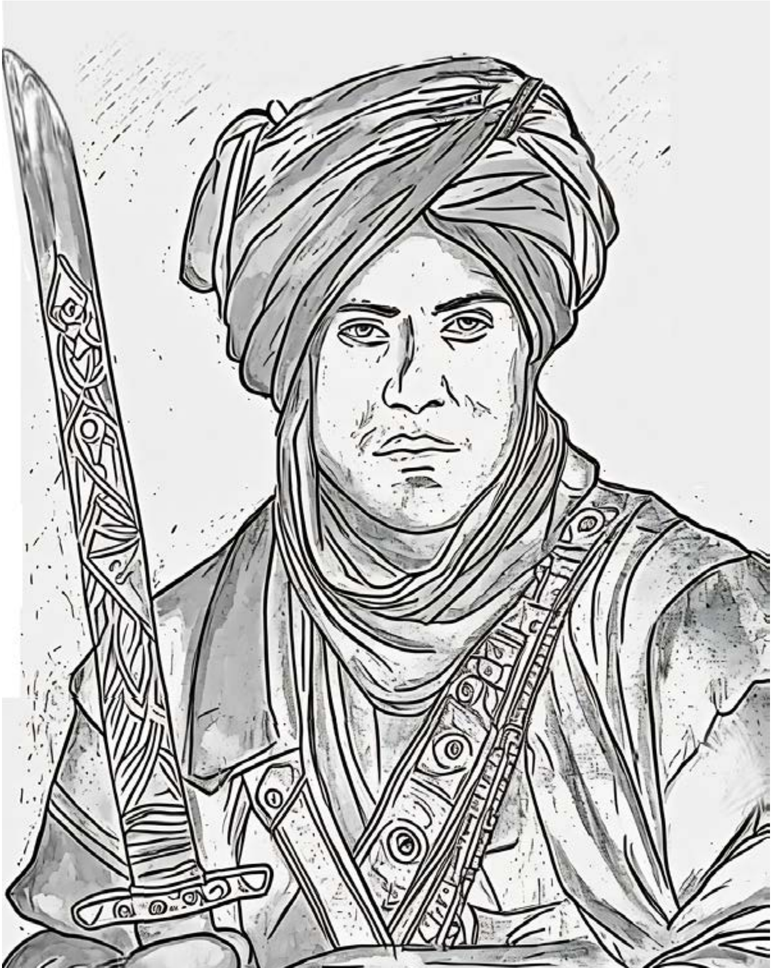

Nawab of Sudhnoti Sardar Lamma Khan, also known as Baba-e-Sarha Taj Abakhel Sadozai.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE PEACE AGREEMENT BETWEEN RAJA OF POONCH AND SARDAR LAMMA KHAN (ALSO KNOWN AS THE LAMMA KHAN AGREEMENT):

CHAPTER 33

Sardar Lamma Khan Abakhel Sadozai, also known as Sarha Taj, was born in the Miral branch of the Dirop family, descending from the ninth generation of Baba-e-Dirop, in the village of Dhaman, located in the Baloch Tehsil of present-day District Sudhnoti in Azad Kashmir. He was the younger son of Sardar Suba Khan, the last ruler of Sudhnoti, and the brother of Sardar Sarzamin Khan. His name, Lamma Khan, was given to him by his father due to his exceptional height, meaning "the tall Sardar," as he

stood 8 feet 10 inches tall by the age of 22. Lamma Khan was known for his formidable strength and stature, and it was said that he could effortlessly carry a healthy buffalo on his shoulders over long distances without assistance.

Lamma Khan's physical presence was so imposing that when he removed the crown from the Raja of Poonch's head and prevented him from placing it on his head in Sudhnoti, the Raja of Poonch never wore his crown again in Sudhnoti, despite the insistence of numerous Sudhnoti chiefs. After the Raja of Poonch returned to Poonch from Sudhnoti, he persistently demanded that the chiefs of Sudhnoti punish Lamma Khan for his actions. However, none of the Sudhnoti chiefs dared to confront Lamma Khan. Instead, many of them secretly rejoiced at Lamma Khan's audacious act of removing the Raja's crown. Consequently, they bestowed upon him the title of Sarha Taj, meaning "the Sardar who is praised and called 'Sartaj' (head crown) for a proud accomplish-

ment." To this day, Lamma Khan's descendants are known by this title, Sarha Taj.

According to the ancient register of Sudhnoti, Sardar Sherbaz Khan, the grandson of Sardar Lamma Khan, recounts that after seeing the growing threat from the Raja of Poonch, who was determined to seek revenge, the chiefs of Sudhnoti warned Lamma Khan of the Raja's intentions. In response, Lamma Khan wrote a letter to Raja Poonch, clearly stating that "I have received news that you are after my life and are employing various means for revenge. However, you may not know that I am the son of Sardar Suba Khan, in whose respect the people of Sudhnuti still stand. Therefore, in Sudhnuti, by the grace of God, all your schemes against me will prove futile. However, your intentions have now compelled me to take a stand against you". Lamma Khan declared that he would now confront the Raja and that no mercy should be expected from him.

Later that year, when the chiefs of Sudhnoti began transporting the 5% tax from their region to the forts of the Raja of Poonch, Lamma Khan intercepted and looted the tax convoys at various points, killing 40 soldiers of the Raja's army in the process. Many of the Sudhnoti chiefs secretly supported Lamma Khan during this period. When the tax was being transported again the following year, Lamma Khan once more looted it, but the Sudhnoti chiefs remained silent.

A year earlier, when the Raja of Poonch visited Sudhnoti and Lamma Khan removed the crown from his head in Palandri, the 45 Sudhnoti chiefs had promised the Raja that they would punish Lamma Khan, but they did not fulfill this promise. Instead, they honored Lamma Khan with the title of Sarha Taj and made him a hero of Sudhnoti. Realizing that a direct confrontation with Lamma Khan might lead to further unrest and the potential loss of Sudhnoti, the Raja of Poonch decided to pursue a diplomatic solution, It was also due

to the reason that, by 1867, he had not yet firmly established his foothold in Sudhnoti.

However, it was a different matter that the chieftains of Sudhnoti had long-held rivalries among themselves, leading to prolonged battles and attempts to conquer each other. Although they sought financial support from Poonch and became part of the Poonch Alliance, when it came to the collection of taxes from Sudhnoti-albeit very minimal-these taxes, which were being sent outside Sudhnoti, did not seem beneficial to any of the forty-five chieftains of Sudhnoti. Consequently, they were becoming increasingly influenced by their leader, Sardar Lamma Khan.

Given these circumstances, Raja Poonch had several options to stop the plundering and violence perpetrated by Sardar Lamma Khan. He could either fight directly with him and, if victorious, retrieve his plundered wealth, effectively ending the looting, or he could force the chieftains of the Poonch Alliance to confront Lamma Khan directly. If

the Alliance defeated Lamma Khan, he could reclaim his wealth and eliminate Lamma Khan from the scene. However, if the chieftains failed to meet this responsibility, Raja Poonch could wage war against them to conquer Sudhnoti completely, installing his own tax collectors in place of the chieftains and ensuring that taxes reached Poonch.

Nevertheless, Raja Poonch deemed all three options inappropriate. Engaging directly with Sardar Lamma Khan would likely provoke the chieftains of Sudhnoti, who were still covertly supporting Lamma Khan's looting, viewing such an attack as a matter of pride. This was evidenced by their previous collaboration with Lamma Khan in stripping Poonch of its wealth over the past two years.

Sardar Sherbaz Khan notes that the day the chieftains of Sudhnoti first paid their taxes to Raja Poonch marked a turning point, as it was then that the Poonch Alliance's interests no longer aligned with those of the forty-five chieftains. By the time they paid their taxes

again the following year, conflicts between Raja Poonch and Sardar Lamma Khan were escalating. In this environment, the chieftains sought to further their personal interests by aligning with Lamma Khan.

Thus, in this potential conflict, Raja Poonch faced the risk of defeat, especially since he had previously suffered one significant loss against Lamma Khan's father, the former ruler Sardar Suba Khan, and had also been humiliated by Lamma Khan during another encounter. Therefore, Raja Poonch did not consider it prudent to confront either Lamma Khan or the chieftains of Sudhnoti. He recognized that all the chieftains had already allied with Lamma Khan, who was the brave son of the notable former ruler Sardar Suba Khan. Engaging with him could lead to losing the support of the Poonch Alliance.

In light of this, Raja Poonch chose to adopt a path of diplomacy and pragmatism. He initially consulted with all the chieftains of Sudhnoti and subsequently sent a delegation,

including representatives from the Alliance, to negotiate a peace treaty with Sardar Lamma Khan. These negotiations were successful, leading to the signing of a peace agreement on April 15, 1867, known as the "Lamma Khan Agreement."

According to this agreement, Lamma Khan was granted seven villages in present-day Baloch Tehsil as a tax-free estate, in addition to his two villages, Dhaman and Paghonar, making a total of nine villages. Despite being part of the Poonch Union, these villages were declared a tax-free zone. Following this agreement, Lamma Khan ceased his raids on the tax convoys, bringing an end to the conflict between him and the Raja of Poonch.

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A BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF SARDAR ABDUL MANNAN KHAN ABAKHEL SADOZAI'S REBELLION IN SUDHNOTI AND THE SUDHNOTI FREEDOM MOVEMENT

CHAPTER 34

Sardar Abdul Mannan Khan Abakhel Sadozai, also known as Manna Khan, was born in the village of Dhaman in the Baloch tehsil of present-day Sudhnoti district in Azad Kashmir. He belonged to the Miral branch of the Dirop family and was the great-grandson of the founder of the Dirop dynasty. Sardar Abdul Mannan was the eldest son of Sardar Lamma Khan, also known as Saraha Taj, who was the youngest son of Sardar Suba Khan, the last ruler of Sudhnoti. Abdul Mannan was also the father of Sardar

Sherbaz Khan, the author of the ancient manuscript "Register Sudhnoti" who writes that after the death of Raja Moti Singh of Poonch, his son Baldev Singh succeeded him. One of Baldev Singh's first actions was to establish a high school in the capital of Poonch, naming it "Victoria Jubilee State High School" after Queen Victoria. There was no school in Poonch prior to this. Baldev Singh requested the British Indian government to send a representative for the inauguration of the school, and Mr. Hamilton was sent for this purpose.

Subsequently, Raja Poonch requested the British Indian government to appoint a separate Resident Officer in Poonch to delineate the boundaries between the states of Poonch and Jammu & Kashmir. The British Indian agreed to this request, and Mr. Hamilton was also appointed as the Special Assistant Resident Officer in Poonch. He established the boundaries of Poonch and Jammu & Kashmir, bringing Poonch directly under the administration of British India through a new procedure.

This development relieved Poonch State

of the constant threat from Jammu and Kashmir, allowing it to function as a separate state and with Poonch now getting furher strength, Baldev Singh initiated several developmental projects, including the construction of roads connecting Poonch with Jammu, Sialkot, and even Kashmir, besides making many trails for the route up to Sudhnoti to establish regular trade relations. With the completion of these works, he also began focusing on ending the internal autonomy of the Sudhnoti chiefs. To this end, he expanded his army and installed modern artillery in the three forts of Sudhnoti. He held several meetings with Sudhnoti chiefs and assured them all sorts of support and cooperation under his rulership which made the relations of Sudhnoti chiefs with the Poonch bloc alliance even better.

During this time, Sardar Lamma Khan, known as Saraha Taj, passed away, and his son Sardar Abdul Mannan Khan inherited his father's lands. Raja Baldev Singh then wrote to

Sardar Abdul Mannan Khan, demanding that according to the agreement of the Union of the Poonch Bloc, the seven villages granted as a tax-free estate to Sardar Lamma Khan by Raja Moti Singh (the previous ruler of Poonch) were now subject to taxation.

According to this agreement, the two villages, Dhaman and Paghonar, were already under the rule of Sardar Lamma Khan and had not been included in the Union of the Poonch Bloc treaty, as they were part of the ancestral inheritance of Sardar Abdul Mannan Khan's forefathers. However, the seven other villages, along with these two, had been granted to Sardar Lamma Khan as part of a tax-free estate. With the death of Sardar Lamma Khan, the agreement had automatically expired, and Raja Baldev Singh asked Abdul Mannan Khan to visit Poonch Palace to arrange for the taxation of the seven villages, leaving aside his ancestral villages of Dhaman and Paghonar.

Sardar Abdul Mannan Khan, in response, flatly refused to pay any taxes on the seven

villages under his control. According to the documents of the Union of the Poonch Bloc treaty, there was no clause stating that the estate would automatically be passed on to Lamma Khan's descendants. To resolve this dispute, Raja Poonch Baldev Singh first took all the Sudhnoti chiefs into confidence and then sent a delegation of these chiefs to Sardar Abdul Mannan Khan, asking him to pay taxes on the seven villages according to the Poonch Bloc Union treaty.

The delegation of Sudhnoti chiefs tried to convince Sardar Abdul Mannan Khan, reminding him of the past events when the chiefs of Sudhnoti had joined the Poonch Bloc Union. At that time, Sardar Lamma Khan had refused to become part of the Union, leading to tensions between Sudhnoti and Poonch. This conflict worsened when, during a visit of Raja Poonch to Sudhnoti, Sardar Lamma Khan removed the crown from Raja Poonch's head. The situation escalated to the point where all the chiefs of Sudhnoti, considering it a matter of honor,

sided with Sardar Lamma Khan against Raja Poonch. Sardar Lamma Khan then attacked and looted Raja Poonch's caravans throughout Sudhnoti and killed his soldiers. This forced Raja Poonch into submission, as he had already suffered a defeat at the hands of Sudhnoti in a direct battle eight years earlier, in 1859. At that time, Raja Poonch realized that engaging in another conflict with Sardar Lamma Khan and the united Sudhnoti chiefs could open the door for Jammu and Kashmir to take control of Poonch, something he wanted to avoid. Therefore, out of necessity, he granted Sardar Lamma Khan a tax-free estate of seven villages, thus ending the conflict with the chiefs of Sudhnoti. However, now the situation was different. Poonch no longer faced any threat from Jammu and Kashmir, nor was it weaker than Sudhnoti in any way. In fact, Poonch was now directly under British India, receiving all kinds of support from the British government. Poonch had become much stronger than Sudhnoti, and this time the

chiefs of Sudhnoti were not willing to support Sardar Abdul Mannan Khan to maintain their own internal autonomy. The delegation advised him that it would be better for him to surrender the seven villages and pay taxes, as he would still retain the two villages of Dhaman and Paghonar, which were not part of the Poonch Bloc Union, a fact acknowledged by Raja Poonch himself.

When Sardar Abdul Mannan Khan refused to accept any of the proposals from the delegation and insisted on his stance, Raja Poonch was compelled to attack his estate. He sent a force of 1,000 soldiers, most of them Muslim infantry, along with small mountain cannons, to launch an assault on Sardar Abdul Mannan Khan's estate. When Abdul Mannan saw the large army and the silence of the other Sudhnoti chiefs, he retreated into the mountains with his small force without engaging in battle. When Raja Poonch's army entered Sardar Abdul Mannan Khan's estate, they seized control of the seven villages without

facing any resistance. The leadership of these villages was handed over to the local chiefs, bringing them under Raja Poonch's authority.

The army then proceeded to Sardar Abdul Mannan Khan's ancestral village of Dhaman, again without resistance. Raja Poonch appointed Sardar Nathu Khan Abakhel Sadozai, the son of Sardar Suba Khan (the cousin of Sardar Lamma Khan) and the elder son of Sardar Sarzameen Khan (the former ruler of Sadhnuti), as the chief of Dhaman and Paghonar villages. Raja Poonch instructed Nathu Khan to distance himself from Sardar Abdul Mannan Khan, assuring him that if he remained neutral, the two villages would continue to enjoy their tax-free status. However, if Nathu Khan supported Abdul Mannan Khan, the two villages would be incorporated into the Poonch Bloc Union, and the rebels would face severe consequences.

After securing this agreement with Sardar Nathu, Raja Poonch's army, without any fighting, took control of the seven villages of Sardar

Abdul Mannan Khan's estate and returned to the central fort of Bawar (Baral) in Sadhnuti. However, when 200 Dogra cavalry soldiers from this army were returning to Poonch, Sardar Abdul Mannan Khan's forces ambushed them in the forest near Baisari, killing 30 Dogra soldiers. Abdul Mannan Khan managed to escape after the attack, avoiding capture.

Following this incident, the Dogra forces laid siege to Baisari, but Abdul Mannan Khan had already moved to Charbiyar. Sardar Sherbaz Khan writes in "Register Sudhnoti" that after reaching Charbiyar, Abdul Mannan Khan made his way through the forests to the jungle of Baloch Kahala, where he learned that Hajira was under siege by five hundred soldiers. He then took refuge in the forests of Panjar, from where he continued his guerrilla warfare against the Dogra army. He also shifted his women and children to Taxila. Sardar Sherbaz Khan, the writer of "Register Sudhnoti" who was himself in Taxila till his young age write about these clashes that

during these thirteen months of the Sudhnoti Freedom Movement, Abdul Mannan Khan led fifteen attacks on the Dogra forces, killing 106 soldiers. These attacks were meticulously planned, often targeting tax-collecting convoys traveling from Sudhnoti to Poonch under the cover of darkness. His guerrilla tactics kept the Dogra forces in constant fear, leading to his growing popularity among the youth of Sudhnoti, many of whom joined his cause resulted in his army increased considerably. On December 20, 1893, Abdul Mannan Khan launched a major and successful night attack on the fort of Brahan (Bharand), killing 48 Dogra soldiers and looting the fort's supplies. In response, the Dogra government announced a reward of Rs10,000 for his capture, dead or alive, and published his descriptions and pictures in newspapers.

After this announcement, a friend of Abdul Mannan Khan, Raja Abid Khan, the son of Raja Karamdad Khan of Murree, betrayed him for the reward. He invited Abdul Mannan Khan to a meal,

drugged him, and handed his father's friend and benefactor over to the Dogra authorities in unconscious condition. Abdul Mannan Khan was imprisoned in Poonch Fort for several months. Sardar Sherbaz Khan writes that Azam Mangral, an eyewitness to the martyrdom of Sardar Abdul Mannan Khan, told him, "I was carrying firewood on a camel when I saw that some men from the village of Bharand were being taken by the Dogra army to Fort Brahan (Bharand). When the soldiers saw me passing by, they caught me as well and said, 'Come, we'll show you a little spectacle in the fort, and you can leave after watching it.' Azam Mangral says that, afraid, I went to the fort with the villagers. When we arrived at Fort Brahan, we saw the body of Sardar Abdul Manan Khan hanging at the main gate, with his hands and feet severed and lying on the ground. However, there was no sign of blood anywhere. Sardar Abdul Mannan Khan's dignified appearance made it seem as though he was still angry, with his eyes wide open, filled with fury. This scene was witnessed

by me and dozens of others. I can never forget the Hindu soldier who kept looking at both Sardar Abdul Mannan and us, repeatedly reciting the verse: 'Ag da phaga khan da mana nik da misa,' a well-known verse in Sudhanoti referring to Sardar Manan Khan, which translates to Urdu as, 'A flame of fire is Manan Khan, whose broad nose sits firm.'

Azam Mangral further said, 'This happened on Friday, May 15, 1894, but it seemed as if Sardar Abdul Manan Khan had actually been martyred a few days earlier in Fort Poonch after his hands and feet were severed. The purpose of bringing his body to Fort Brahan was for the Dogra army to take revenge for their defeat at Fort Brahan and instill fear among the rebels. That's why the Dogra soldiers gathered people to show them the humiliating death of Sardar Abdul Mannan Khan. They did not even hand over his body to the family afterward. It is believed that his body was buried in a ravine beneath the fort or taken back to Poonch. God knows better,

the exact location remains unknown.

In the Indian British Army, Raja Tahir Azam shared with his friend Sardar Sherbaz Khan the firsthand account of his father, Azam Mangral, regarding the martyrdom of Sardar Abdul Mannan Khan. After hearing this, Sherbaz Khan personally met Baba-e-Azam Mangral, who recounted the brutal martyrdom of Sardar Abdul Mannan Khan, describing the harrowing condition of his body as he had witnessed it. Sardar Sherbaz Khan documented this account in the ancient manuscript "Register Sudhnoti", dedicating 64 pages to Sardar Abdul Mannan Khan's freedom movement in Sudhnoti.

In this book, as with all other events, we have provided a brief historical background of Sardar Abdul Mannan Khan's freedom movement in Sudhnoti. The detailed accounts of Sardar Abdul Mannan Khan's fifteen battles against the Dogra army and the full history of the 1832 Freedom Struggle will be recorded in the second volume of "Register Sudhnoti".

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Sardar Abdul Mannan Khan Abakhel Sadozi, also known as Manna Shaheed, who led the freedom movement of Sudhnoti.

"SUDHNOTI JAGIR IS NOT PART OF THE POONCH STATE" - A BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE LAHORE JUSTICE COURT'S DECISION

CHAPTER 35

When British India started surveying land across all states under its control, the princely states of Jammu & Kashmir and Poonch were also instructed to carry out land surveys. Following these instructions, the State of Jammu & Kashmir initiated land surveys in 1898, and soon after, Raja Baldev Singh of Poonch requested the British government to conduct a land survey of the Poonch state. Acting on this request, the British government appointed Mr. Goodenough as the Chief Administrator

and sent a delegation of British engineers to the Poonch State to begin the survey.

As the land survey in Poonch commenced, the people of Poonch realized that the British delegation was conducting the survey of lands in Jammu & Kashmir and Poonch to put their lands under the administration of the Dogra rulers. This created fear and panic among the local population of Jammu & Kashmir and Poonch. However, under the oppressive and tyrannical Dogra regime, the people, who had lived for years under slavery, oppression, and violence, were unable to raise their voices for their rights. Consequently, all land in Jammu & Kashmir was easily transferred to the name of the Maharaja of Kashmir. This meant that no Kashmiri could sell or purchase land, as all land ownership was now under the Maharaja, turning the people into tenants (mazareen) living on the Maharaja's land instead of being landowners.

Similarly, Raja of Poonch also adopted the same practice, beginning the process of regis-

tering all land in Poonch under his name. Seizing the opportunity, he also aimed to annex Sudhnoti into the Poonch state by using the British land survey expedition. When this news reached the leaders of Sudhnoti, they immediately convened a Loya Jirga, where the educated and respected Sardar Bahadur Ali Khan was unanimously chosen as the leader of Sudhnoti to represent their interests and prevent the British and Dogra governments from surveying the land of Sudhnoti.

Sardar Bahadur Ali Khan went to the Dogra court in Poonch, presenting the demands of the Sudhnoti leaders, and conveyed to the Raja of Poonch that the state of Poonch should not interfere in the internal matters of Sudhnoti. He argued that Sudhnoti had no legal or territorial connection with either Poonch bloc union or Jammu & Kashmir, and thus there was no need for Poonch to conduct a land survey in Sudhnoti. However, the Raja of Poonch bluntly replied that they were

compelled to do so because it was a directive from the British government.

In response, Sardar Bahadur Ali Khan requested that if the British government insisted on a survey, then the land administration of Sudhnoti should be entrusted to the leaders of Sudhnoti. But once again, the Raja gave the same answer, stating that under British rule, all states' lands were being registered in the names of their respective rulers i.e their rajas, maharajas, nawabs and khans, and that Poonch had no control over this process.

After receiving this response, Sardar Bahadur Ali Khan realized that both the British and Dogra rulers had colluded, leaving only two options: either surrender the autonomy of Sudhnoti and allow it to be annexed into Poonch, registering its lands under the Raja's name and become their tenant farmer (mazareen) instead of owners of land or fight for their freedom, dignity, and honor. Sardar Bahadur Ali Khan, along with the leaders of Sudhnoti, chose the path of resistance in line

with the Pakhtun tradition, preferring to fight and die rather than live as slaves.

Sardar Bahadur Ali Khan then swore an oath with all the leaders of Sudhnoti on the Quran and the sword, organizing them for battle. On the other side, the British and Dogra delegation, after completing the land survey in Poonch, crossed into Sudhnoti territory on October 5, 1903, witout any fear, and set up camp at the border location of Palangi at around 1:00 pm noon. At the same time, Sardar Bahadur Ali Khan arrived with thousands of loyal leaders from Sudhnoti, challenging the British delegation and the Dogra security personnel. He gave them one hour to leave without conducting a survey of Sudhnoti's land.

Seeing thousands of armed Sudhnoti leaders ready to fight, the British delegation, led by Engineer Mr. Goodenough, was astonished. Until then, the delegation had encountered no opposition during their surveys in Jammu & Kashmir and Poonch, and here they had not even entered Sudhnoti, but were already

being confronted. Realizing the gravity of the situation, Mr. Goodenough communicated with the Sudhnoti leaders through his officer Mr. Trench, who was fluent in Punjabi, Urdu, and Hindi.

Upon learning that Sudhnoti was not part of Poonch, Mr. Goodenough, who respected honesty and bravery, advised the leaders of Sudhnoti to file a case against the Raja of Poonch in the Lahore Justice Court. He assured them that the court, the highest in British India for the people of Poonch, would deliver justice, and he was confident that they would receive a fair ruling. After Mr. Goodenough's assurance, Sardar Bahadur Ali Khan, appointed as the leader by the Sardars of Sudhnoti, filed a lawsuit against Raja of Poonch, Baldev Singh, for encroaching on Sudhnoti's land rights. Before the case was heard, Raja Baldev Singh met with Bahadur Ali Khan and offered him a bribe of 10,000 rupees in cash and an estate worth another 10,000 rupees to withdraw the case from the Lahore Justice Court. Bahadur Ali

Khan, however, he rejected the offer scornfully. In response, Baldev Singh resorted to threats, but Bahadur Ali Khan, undeterred by the fear of death, stood firm. Consequently, Baldev Singh hired assassins to follow Bahadur Ali Khan constantly.

One day, while Bahadur Ali Khan was offering prayers in a mosque, the assassins poisoned his shoes. At that time, people often walked for miles, and their feet would get severely cracked. Enemies would sometimes place poison in shoes, which would seep through the cracked heels into the bloodstream, causing death within hours. After finishing his prayers and wearing his shoes, Bahadur Ali Khan walked only a short distance before feeling the poison coursing through his body. He told his companions that the enemy had done their work, and he was sure they had poisoned his shoes. Shortly after, he collapsed. Despite efforts to get him medical treatment, Bahadur Ali Khan, the nation's benefactor, passed away on 7 September 1903.

On the other hand, during the hearing of the property rights case of Sudhnoti, when the English lawyer of the Sardars of Sudhnoti, Mr. Patton, challenged Raja Poonch Baldev Singh in the Lahore Justice Court regarding Sudhnoti not being part of the Poonch state, Raja Poonch Baldev Singh presented official documents as evidence from his grandfather Raja Dhian Singh's Poonch estate. These documents were granted by the Sikh Empire, which awarded Raja Dhian Singh a 1600 square mile estate in Poonch with signed seals. This same estate was later given to Raja Poonch Mian Moti Singh, the son of Raja Dhian Singh, by Maharaja Gulab Singh, the founder of the Jammu and Kashmir government. The British Government of India received these documents on December 9, 1849, which were recognized and confirmed by Sir Frederick Curri Baronet's British India Court on January 1, 1950.

Thus, the documents regarding the 1600 square mile Poonch estate, awarded to Raja

Dhian Singh by the Sikh Empire, were provided with Maharaja Ranjit Singh's signed seal. When Raja Poonch Baldev Singh presented these documents in the Lahore Justice Court, it was established that the 1600 square mile estate belonged to Raja Dhian Singh's heirs, Mian Moti Singh and his son Raja Baldev Singh. However, these documents did not prove the claim of an additional 550 square miles of Sudhnoti territory as part of the Poonch estate. The Sikh Empire had occupied 550 squre miles of Sudhnoti after 3rd Sikh Sudhnoti War but Ranjit Singh had only temporarily merged Sudhnoti into Poonch estate based on administrative divisions without issuing any formal documentation or certificate from the Sikh Empire. Therefore, Raja Poonch lacked any agreement or official documents that were recognized by the Sikh Empire, the British Government of India, or the Jammu and Kashmir government, which could substantiate Sudhnoti as part of the Poonch estate. Consequently, on March 5, 1904,

the Lahore Justice Court ordered that the administration of this land be assigned to the Sardars of Sudhnoti.

During the life of Sardar Bahadur Ali Khan, the property rights case of the Sardars of Sudhnoti could not be decided. However, the Sardars of Sudhnoti also filed a case against Raja Baldev Singh for the murder of Sardar Bahadur Ali Khan. Thus, Baldev Singh became entangled in two legal cases. Following Bahadur Ali Khan's death, the Sardars of Sudhnoti elected a new leader, Sardar Mastana Khan, who pursued the remaining case. Eventually, on March 5, 1904, the Special Judge of the Lahore Justice Court, Justice Lord Curzon, ruled in favor of Mastana Khan with the following words, which are presented here for the readers of the book:

"Raja Poonch Baldev Singh's official documents for the 1600 square mile Poonch estate do not include the 550 square miles of Sudhnoti. Therefore, this court recognizes Sudhnoti as administratively part of the

Poonch estate and orders the administration of Sudhnoti's land to be assigned to the Sardars of Sudhnoti."

According to the ancient register of Sudhnoti, Sardar Sherbaz Khan writes that after this ruling, Sardar Mastana Khan celebrated the victory by placing a garland around his lawyer Mr. Patton's neck in the courthouse. However, Mr. Paton returned the gesture by placing the garland around Mastana Khan's neck and raised his hands in triumph. This marked the second failure of the Dogras to merge Sudhnoti with Poonch. After losing the case, Raja Baldev Singh's defeat emboldened other tribes in Poonch, leading to widespread protests against him. Within six months, Raja Baldev Singh was forced to grant land rights to his subjects in Poonch as well.

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BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE PARTICIPATION OF 20,000 SADOZAIS FROM SUDHNOTI IN WORLD WAR-I AND THE NEW PROSPEROUS ERA OF SUDHNOTI

CHAPTER 36

During World War I, while the British Indian government formally recruited millions of individuals from India into its army, even the small state of Poonch, with a population of only 318,000 people, contributed 15,000 recruits for the war effort to fulfill the demands of the British Indian Government. Despite this, the British Indian government demanded more recruits from Raja Baldev Singh of Poonch. Following the footsteps of his ancestors, just as his father, Raja Moti Singh, had supported the British

Indian government with financial and military aid during the Indian Rebellion of 1857, Raja Baldev Singh offered the British 15,000 soldiers and a financial contribution of Rs 44 thousand and five hundred for World War-I. Nevertheless, the British Resident Officer in Poonch continued to demand more recruits, even though joining the European war at that time was considered akin to suicide.

The small state of Poonch, with its limited population, found it impossible to meet the growing demands for recruits. Still, Raja Baldev Singh considered it his duty to comply with his British overlords' orders. Therefore, he reached out to the Sardars of Sudhnoti, a region that had been overlooked during previous recruitments for the British army. At that time, Sudhnoti had a population of 61,000, and when combined with Poonch, the total population amounted to about 375,000.

When Raja Baldev Singh invited the Sardars of Sudhnoti to enlist in the British army, they refused. As a result, Raja Baldev Singh turned

to his governor, Sardar Ashraf Khan Popalzai, as a mediator, since both the Sardars of Sudhnoti and Sardar Ashraf Khan belonged to the same lineage of the Afghan Pakhtun tribe.

Muhammad Din Fauq, the author of "Tareekh-e-Aqwam-e-Poonch" (History of the Tribes of Poonch), wrote about the family background of Sardar Ashraf Khan Popalzai. Sardar Ashraf Khan's father, Sardar Muhammad Hayat Khan Popalzai, was a highly educated man, a graduate of Aligarh University, who had migrated from Afghanistan to the Punjab region of British India due to a lack of suitable employment in his homeland. He became a magistrate in Gujarat, and when Sardar Ashraf Khan was born, he ensured that his son received a high-quality education at Lahore University. During this time, Raja Baldev Singh of Poonch was also studying at Lahore University, and their friendship began there.

A few years after completing his education, Sardar Ashraf Khan Popalzai was appointed

Superintendent of Police in Poonch by Raja Baldev Singh, and five years later, he became the Governor of Poonch. It was during World War-I that the British Indian government needed recruits from all warrior tribes across the Indian subcontinent, and Raja Baldev Singh insisted that Governor Sardar Ashraf Khan recruit soldiers from Sudhnoti for the war.

The reason behind using Sardar Ashraf Khan for this task was that the Sardars of Sudhnoti had become deeply estranged from Raja Baldev Singh after a legal dispute over land measurement in Poonch. Despite Raja Baldev Singh's persistent demands for recruits, the Sardars of Sudhnoti refused. Raja Baldev Singh explained to Sardar Ashraf Khan that the Sardars of Sudhnoti saw every initiative from him as a conspiracy, and because of their enmity, they were unwilling to provide recruits. However, since Ashraf Khan shared the same Pakhtun lineage with them, he could possibly convince them to enlist.

On September 21, 1914, Governor Sardar

Ashraf Khan Popalzai, along with a delegation from the British army, arrived at the center of Sudhnoti, Palandri. He stayed there for a month, meeting with the Sardars of Sudhnoti and persuading them to enlist. As a result, 20,000 Sadozai soldiers from Sudhnoti were recruited into the British army.

The sudden enlistment of such a large number of people, despite the Sardars' earlier refusal, prompted Muhammad Din Fauq, the writer of "Tareekh-e-Aqwam-e-Poonch" (History of the Tribes of Poonch) to write a letter to Sardar Ashraf Khan asking for an explanation. In response, Sardar Ashraf Khan stated that the Sadozai tribe of Sudhnoti belonged to the Afghan Sadozai clan. He found them to be similar to Afghans in all aspects of life, including bravery, hospitality, and physical appearance. He noted that the Sadozai tribe is actually a branch of the Popalzai clan, which has produced some of the greatest kings. This connection instilled in him a deep love for the Sadozai people, that is

why he felt it disgusted to see these brave Sadozais buried under a useless burden and this was unbearable for him that they remain get idle while their natural qualities of bravery and courage were not utilized. Since the Great War was ongoing at that time, I initiated a campaign to recruit as many people as possible into the British Army, which proved to be a sensible movement, leading thousands of Sudhans to join the Great War. He further said that I noticed one Sudhan woman had only one son, who also came to enlist for the war. Considering the condition of his poor and elderly mother, I refused to let him enlist. However, he went elsewhere and enlisted on his own. This clearly demonstrated that God had endowed this nation with qualities of bravery and valor, which the Great War showcased to the entire world. This is why today the Sadozai Sudhan community is counted among the best, strongest, and most martial communities in India.

This was a summary of the thoughts

presented by Sardar Ashraf Khan Popolzai, the Governor of Poonch, in response to a letter from Muhammad Din Fauq. Sardar Sherbaz Khan, the author of old manuscipt of Registar Sudhnoti, writes that 20,000 Sadozais from Sudhnoti participated in World War-I, of whom 4,000 were killed and thousands were wounded. Despite this, when these thousands of Sadozai Sudhans returned to their homeland of Sudhnoti after the war, a new era of prosperity began here, as now twenty thousand households were financially well-off. They received substantial cash from the British Government of India, along with several estates, positions, and monthly stipends, which posed a significant threat to the Dogra rulers of Jammu and Kashmir and Poonch. However, time had passed, and for the Dogra rulers of Jammu and Kashmir and the state of Poonch, there was no other beneficial option but to reconcile with Sudhnoti.

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A BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND ON THE DISSOCIATION OF SUDHNOTI FROM THE STATE OF POONCH AND ITS NEW JOURNEY TOWARD INCLUSION IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

CHAPTER 37

In the World War-I, twenty thousand Sadozai Sudhans were recruited into British Indian Army. After their return to their homeland, from various battlefronts in different countries, a new era of prosperity began for the region. As described in the previous chapter, the British government of India awarded these twenty thousand soldiers, and their families, with significant monetary compensation and medals. In addition, several of the Sudhan chieftains were granted estates, positions, and monthly stipends in recognition of

their bravery during the war. As a result, the financial status of these Sudhan chieftains improved considerably. After retiring from service, these soldiers gathered under the leadership of the "Father of Sudhnoti," Colonel Khan Muhammad Khan. Leveraging this military strength, Colonel Khan Muhammad Khan reorganized the Sudhnoti movement, eventually severing all ties with Raja Poonch. Observing the growing divide between Sudhnoti and Poonch, the Maharaja of Kashmir began to strengthen relations with Colonel Khan Muhammad Khan, promising him representation for Sudhnoti within the government of Jammu & Kashmir. Consequently, Khan Muhammad Khan was persuaded to include Sudhnoti in Kashmir, a decision he considered beneficial for the region at the time. In 1932, Colonel Khan Muhammad Khan officially integrated Sudhnoti into Jammu and Kashmir. Despite repeated pleas from Raja Poonch and attempts by other Sudhan chieftains who had even Allama Iqbal (the "Poet of the East") to intervene, asking

Khan to keep Sudhnoti part of the Poonch bloc, but Khan Muhammad Khan remained steadfast. In September 1932, Sudhnoti was formally integrated into Jammu & Kashmir. Shortly thereafter, through the efforts of Khan Muhammad Khan, the Maharaja of Kashmir also convinced Sardar Fateh Muhammad Khan Kareelvi, a wealthy landowner from the Mendhar Thakiala Tehsil in Poonch, to annex the Mendhar region into Jammu & Kashmir. On July 1, 1933, Sardar Fateh Muhammad Khan, through Khan Muhammad Khan's mediation, accepted representation in the Jammu & Kashmir government and formally annexed Mendhar into the region. Eventually, the Maharaja of Kashmir exerted so much pressure on Raja Poonch that he was compelled to dissolve the statehood of Poonch. By 1940, due to the actions of Khan Muhammad Khan and other Sudhan chieftains based on revenge, the independent status of the State of Poonch was abolisshed, and it became a mere estate within Jammu & Kashmir. ❖

THE INVOLVEMENT OF 60,402 SUDOZAI SUDHAN PATHANS FROM SUDHNOTI IN WORLD WAR-II AND ITS BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

CHAPTER 38

World War-II began in Europe on September 1, 1939, with Germany's attacks on Poland and British territories, rapidly engulfing many nations across the globe. Like World War-I, Sudhnoti once again played a significant role when, in response to a request from the British government of India, the leader of Sudhnoti, Sardar Khan Muhammad, recruited 60,402 Sudozai Sudhan Pathan soldiers in May 1940 to participate in World War-II.

These were the same Sadozai Sudhan sol-

diers who had fought in both World Wars and later, in September 1947, took up arms against Maharaja Hari Singh of Kashmir. They were instrumental in establishing their independent government in Sudhnoti for the third time, on October 4, 1947, after their previous uprisings in 1859.

Sardar Sherbaz Khan, in his ancient Register of Sudhnoti, writes that 60,000 Sadozai Sudhan Pathans joined World War-II, out of which five thousand lost their lives in battles across various European fronts, and seven thousand were wounded. The British government of India, much like in World War-I, awarded many of the Sudhan chieftains with lands, high-ranking positions, and medals in recognition of their bravery. The exact number and details of these honors will be discussed in the second volume of the "Register Sudhnoti" under the chapter titled "The Accomplishments of the Sadozai Sudhan Army in World War-I and II."

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A BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF INVITING MAHARAJA HARI SINGH TO VISIT SUDHNOTI

CHAPTER 39

The invitation for Maharaja Hari Singh of Jammu and Kashmir to visit Sudhnoti was extended by Colonel Khan Muhammad, the political agent of the Sudhnoti Soldier Board of the British Army, who was also known as the "Father of Sudhnoti." Colonel Khan Muhammad Khan had joined the British Indian Army in 1902 and displayed exceptional bravery during World War-I, for which he was awarded the Indian Distinguished Service Medal (IDSM) by the British government. He retired from the

servicewith the rank of Subedar Major. During this time, the former tribal leader of Sudhnoti, Sardar Mastana Khan, passed away. Following his death, Khan Muhammad Khan was unanimously elected as the new tribal leader of Sudhnoti in 1921.

After his election, Khan Muhammad Khan brought together the retired Sudozai Sudhan soldiers who had served before World War-I and included five thousand disabled or injured soldiers receiving pensions. In total, he organized eight thousand retired Sadozai soldiers in Sudhnoti. When this development reached the British government, Khan Muhammad Khan was appointed as the political agent of the Sudhnoti Soldier Board. By 1930, twenty thousand more Sadozai soldiers who had fought in World War-I returned to Sudhnoti, and they too gathered under the leadership of Khan Muhammad Khan.

Utilizing this military power, Khan Muhammad Khan successfully separated Sudhnoti from the state of Poonch. As previously mentioned, after

integrating Sudhnoti into Kashmir, Khan Muhammad Khan secured representation for Sudhnoti in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, which was part of Maharaja Hari Singh's offer. Due to this, all of Khan Muhammad Khan's demands were always respected in the assembly. However, after the entire state of Poonch was absorbed into Jammu and Kashmir by 1940, his influence in the assembly began to diminish. Disheartened by this, Khan Muhammad Khan left politics and handed over his seat in the assembly to Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim Khan. He then focused on organizing the retired soldiers of Sudhnoti.

Khan Muhammad Khan initiated a pension fund, collecting one rupee monthly from the thirty thousand Sadhozai Sudhan soldiers in Sudhnoti, using these funds for various welfare projects. He also provided arms and modern weapons to the retired soldiers' households as needed. Meanwhile, Sardar Ibrahim Khan, after receiving no significant attention from

the Maharaja in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, and seeing no progress for Sudhnoti, then the Baba-e-Sudhnoti Khan Sahib, in order to correct the Maharaja's underestimation of Sudhnoti's importance, decided to invite Maharaja Hari Singh to visit Sudhnoti, particularly the town of Rawlakot. His intent was to showcase the military strength of Sudhnoti and use this display to ensure that the Maharaja acknowledged their demands. The goal was to make the Maharaja realize that if Sudhnoti could join Jammu and Kashmir without obstacles, it also had the power to separate from it if necessary.

In response to this invitation, Maharaja Hari Singh visited Rawlakot on April 4, 1947. Upon his arrival, Khan Muhammad Khan had fifteen thousand uniformed Sadozai Sudhan soldiers, who were veterans of World War-I, standing in formation at the parade ground to greet the Maharaja. When Hari Singh witnessed this large number of soldiers, he was stunned, as the force assembled in Sudhnoti was larger

than his entire royal army. Fearful of what he saw, Maharaja Hari Singh turned around and, without reaching the reception stage at the parade ground, quickly returned to Jammu under the protection of his Dogra army.

Back in Jammu, Maharaja Hari Singh held a series of meetings with his military advisors and ministers, which lasted for a month. The primary agenda of these meetings was to find a way to neutralize the influence of the retired soldiers of Sudhnoti. In these meetings, it was eventually decided that all Hindus and Sikhs living in Sudhnoti would be tasked with spying on the Sudhan chieftains. Their mission was to gather intelligence on the locations of retired and active soldiers' homes and identify all mosques in the area. The plan was to obtain British permission to collect illegal arms and then use this pretext to enter Sudhnoti before the upcoming Eid-ul-Fitr on August 18, 1947. Under the guise of collecting weapons, the Maharaja's forces would infiltrate Sudhnoti's villages and towns, and on Eid-ul-Adha,

October 25, 1947, they would launch a coordinated attack during the Eid prayers, aiming to decimate Sudhnoti's military strength. To prepare for this mission, Hindus and Sikhs in Sudhnoti were trained as spies and provided detailed reports on every village, neighborhood, and mosque to the Dogra government.

At the time, Sudhnoti was a Tehsil (part of the larger administrative area) that included present-day Bagh, Poonch, Sudhnoti districts of Azad Kashmir, and a 150-square-mile area of the Kotli district. The representation of this region in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly was held by Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim Khan.

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A BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEW AZAD GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR ON 4TH OCTOBER 1947 IN SUDHNOTI, FOLLOWING THE REVELATION OF MAHARAJA HARI SINGH'S SINISTER PLAN

CHAPTER 40

After Maharaja Hari Singh's visit to Sudhnoti, as mentioned earlier, local Hindus and Sikhs provided intelligence to the Jammu and Kashmir government regarding the mosques and military families in Sudhnoti. Under the pretense of collecting arms, the Maharaja's forces entered Sudhnoti in July 1947. Around the same time, on 19th July 1947, Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim Khan, from the platform of the Muslim Conference, passed the resolution for the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to Pakistan, representing

the aspirations of the state's Muslims. Subsequently, intense pressure was put on Maharaja Hari Singh to accede to Pakistan.

Maharaja Hari Singh, holding the retired Sadozai Sudhan soldiers responsible for these movements, began seeing Sudhnoti as a major threat. Indeed, Sudhnoti, despite being only 550 square miles in the vast state of Jammu and Kashmir, which covered 84,471 square miles, continuously challenged the state both diplomatically and militarily due to its formidable military power. Maharaja Hari Singh, therefore, devised a detailed plan to neutralize this military force.

As part of this plan, he first directed his forces to gather near the mosques of Sudhnoti, anticipating the upcoming Eid-ul-Fitr on 18th August 1947. His forces entered Sudhnoti in mid-July and closely monitored all the mosques, assessing how many people gathered for Eid prayers, particularly focusing on identifying World War-I veterans among them. After Eid-ul-Fitr, the Maharaja's army

began preparing for a simultaneous attack on the mosques during the next Eid, Eid-ul-Adha, scheduled for 25th October 1947. Their goal was to crush Sudhnoti's military power in a single blow during the prayers.

However, when the Sudhan chieftains observed the activities of the Maharaja's forces around the mosques on Eid-ul-Fitr, they realized the gravity of Maharaja Hari Singh's plan. Consequently, Baba-e-Sudhnoti Khan Muhammad Khan formed a war council and decided to fight the Maharaja's forces that were stationed in Sudhnoti. Khan Muhammad Khan became the Chief of Army Staff of this war council, which included all the retired Sadozai Sudhan World War-I soldiers and other locals. According to British author Ian Stephens, the number of these soldiers was 40,000, while historian Mir Alam Khan of "History of Kashmir" wrote it was 60,000. Historian Syed Mahmood Azad noted that the number was four times greater than the Dogra army, while Arif Khan recorded it as

50,000. Sherbaz Khan, in the ancient manuscript "Register Sudhnoti," stated that the number of Sadozai Sudhan fighters between 29th September 1947 and 1st January 1949 (when the ceasefire was signed) was 66,000.

Research by the author of this book suggests that over 70,000 Sadozai Sudhan fighters were involved in the liberation battles across present-day Azad Kashmir, from Muzaffarabad to Bagh, from Bagh to Kotli, from Kotli to Mirpur, and from Mirpur to Bhimber. The headquarters of these forces was in Plandari, Sudhnoti, and their military camp was initially set up in the dense forests of Murree. Here, a home guard was established, and different military units and brigades were formed. When they began collecting donations, Captain Hussain Khan Sadozai donated 40,000 rupees, the largest amount, while over 70,000 Sadozai Sudhan fighters contributed according to their means. These fighters then procured weapons, ammunition, and other equipment from Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa and Afghanistan, which they used in the battles against the Dogra and Indian forces.

The war council formed six Sudhan brigades and thirty-five volunteer force units. In a short span, from 29th September 1947 to 4th October 1947, they liberated Sudhnoti, from Jammu and Kashmir which had an area of 84,471 square miles ruled by Maharaja Hari Singh's. That same night, at 8 PM on 4th October 1947, Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim Khan announced the formation of the first government of Azad Kashmir in Sudhnoti. This event was confirmed by Pakistani newspapers and Radio Pakistan on 5th October 1947, and on 6th October 1947, Indian newspapers and radio also reported the establishment of the first government of Azad Kashmir in Sudhnoti on 4th October 1947.

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Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim Khan

A Brief Historical Explanation of the Sketches Included in This Book

This book contains a total of eighteen sketches. Six of these sketches were created by Sardar Hafiz Waja Khan , who is the first historian and author from Sudhnoti. Hafiz Sahib included these six sketches in his work Diary Dirop Nama, where he sketched several notable rulers of Sudhnoti. The first sketch is of the famous ruler of Sudhnoti, Sardar Saeed Khan-e-Khanan Abdal Sadozai; the second is of Sardar Alam Khan Abakhel Sadozai, a ruler of Sudhnoti; the third is of his grandfather, Sardar Baba Khan Dirop Khan Badshah, anoth-er ruler of Sudhnoti. The fourth sketch is of his father, Sardar Mir Khan

Mir Khan Abakhel Sadozai, and the fifth sketch depicts his uncle, Sardar Daniyal Khan Abakhel Sadozai, the ruler and "Dewan" of Sudhnoti. The sixth sketch is a self-portrait of the author of Dirop Nama, Hafiz Waja Khan Abakhel Sadozai. These sketches were copied from Hafiz Waja Khan's Dirop Nama by Sardar Sherbaz Khan and later incorporated into this book, Register Sudhnoti: A Comprehensive History of the Sadozai Nation. Similarly, the notable ruler of Sudhnoti, Sardar Suba Khan Abakhel Sadozai, included sketches of nine prominent figures in Sudhnoti in his 1855 book, "Makhaz-e-Sudhnoti". One of the sketches in the book is of the author himself, Sardar Suba Khan Abakhel Sadozai, while the second sketch is of his father, Sardar Ibrahim Khan Abakhel Sadozai. The third is of his eldest son, Sardar Sarzamin Khan Abakhel Sadozai, ruler of Sudhnoti; the fourth sketch depicts his younger son, Nawab Sardar Lamma Khan, also known as Baba-e-Saraha Taj Abakhel Sadozai.

The fifth sketch is of his cousin, Sardar Shams Khan Abakhel Sadozai, ruler of Sudhnoti, and the sixth sketch portrays Sardar Shams Khan's father, Sardar Ishaq Khan Abakhel Sadozai. The seventh sketch is of General Sardar Sabz Ali Khan Abakhel Sadozai of Sudhnoti, the eighth sketch is of General Sardar Mali Khan Abakhel Sadozai and the ninth sketch is of Sardar Surbuland Khan Abakhel Sadozi. These nine sketches were also copied by Sardar Sherbaz Khan Abakhel Sadozai into the ancient manuscripts of Register Sudhnoti, from which Yousuf Khan Abakhel Sadozai, the author of Register Sudhnoti: A Comprehensive History of the Sadozai Tribe, later obtained and included them in this book.

Another sketch, which depicts the renowned leader of the Sudhnoti Freedom Movement, Sardar Abdul Mannan Khan Abakhel Sadozai, known as Manna Shaheed, was created by the Dogra Government of Poonch. This sketch was produced by the

Dogra government when they placed a bounty on Sardar Abdul Mannan Shaheed's head. Sardar Sherbaz Khan Abakhel Sadozai also copied this sketch into the ancient manuscripts of Register Sudhnoti, along with the sketches from Dirop Nama and Makhaz-e-Sudhnoti. Thus, in addition to the 17 sketches, the book includes one of Sardar Sherbaz Khan, bringing the total number of sketches in the "Register Sudhnoti: A Comprehensive History of the Sadozai Tribe" to eighteen.

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SKETCHES AND ILLUSTRATIONS IN THIS BOOK

Sardar Milli Khan Abakhel Sadozai

Nawab Jassi Khan Abdal Sadozai

Hafiz Waja Khan Abakhel Sadozai

Captain Sher Baz Khan Abakhel Sadozai

Baba-i-Dirop Khan Badshah

Sardar Mir Khan Abakhel Sadozai

Sardar Alam Khan Abakhel Sadozai

Sardar Saeed Khan Abakhel Sadozai

Sardar Ibrahim Khan Abakhel Sadozai

Sardar Ishaq Khan Abakhel Sadozai

Sardar Sarbuland Khan Abakhel Sadozai

Sardar Daiyal Khan Abakhel Sadozai

Sardar Sarzameen Khan Abakhel Sadozai

Sardar Suba Khan Abakhel Sadozai

Sardar Sabz Ali Khan Abakhel Sadozai

Sardar Shams Khan Abakhel Sadozai

The Map of Sudhnoti

Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim Khan

Sardar Abdul Mannan Khan Abakhel Sadozai

Sardar Lamma Khan Abakhel Sadozai

Yousuf Khan Abakhel Sadozai

"Historian Yousuf Khan Abakhel Sadozai, author of "Register Sudhnoti", was born in the renowned village of Dhaman in Baloch Tehsil, Sudhnoti, a land of martyrs and warriors. He belongs to the royal "Dirop" family of Sudhnoti, and is a thirteenth-generation descendant of the famous ruler of Sudhnoti, Baba-e-Khan Dirop Khan Badshah. He is also a fifth-generation descendant of the last ruler of Sudhnoti, Sardar Suba Khan Abakhel Sadozai.

According to the official records of Harkat-ul-Ansar, he was still a seventh-grade student at High School Dhaman, Pakhonar, when the Kargil conflict erupted between Pakistan and India. During this time, he voluntarily participated in the Kargil War from the platform of the jihadist organization Harkat-ul-Ansar, fighting in the battles of Dras and Tololing. He later spent a significant period with Kashmir's militant organizations.

In addition to "Register Sudhnoti" , he has also authored a book titled "Mehzan-e-Yousuf" on the Kargil War and his life as a jihadi."